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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE thousandth anniversary of the death of King Alfred the Great falls in October 1901, and on Friday of last week a meeting was held at the Mansion House under the presidency of the Lord Mayor to inaugurate a movement for a national commemoration. The Right Hon. James Bryce, seconding the resolution of the Bishop of London that such a commemoration should take place, said that Alfred was in our history the first real living human figure, and he was a type of the special virtues we loved to attribute to our Teutonic ancestors. He was a man valiant in war, but also just and lenient in peace. All his strife was with the invader. He was the first of our kings who set himself deliberately to work to promote learning, education and culture in the people still fierce and rude. He showed that union of strength and courage with wisdom, piety and the love of letters which was the note of all the greatest men in the dark and Middle Ages.

WE are too prone, Mr. Bryce thought, in England to neglect our earlier history and to fix our attention chiefly on the military and naval achievements of the last three centuries. We had enough, perhaps in some quarters more than enough, of the kind of patriotism that exulted in the display of material power and the expansion of the British dominion. We needed also the patriotism which dwelt on great achievements, which built up the English realm within, which had given unity and strength, blent Briton, Saxon, Dane and Norman into one people, and created the heroic temper that shone forth at moments of danger, which had given

those bright examples of virtue which raised the standard of national character and went to rear a happy, well-ordered and enlightened people. It was because that spirit, which made national character, had, perhaps, throughout all our history, had no such noble and perfect embodiment as in King Alfred, that they proposed this commemoration.

IN May of next year the Religious Tract Society will celebrate its centenary, and it is proposed to mark the event by raising £50,000 to promote its work. At an inaugural meeting held at the Mansion House last Tuesday, the Lord Mayor announced that the fund had already reached £29,920, having been started by a donation of £5,000 from Mr. Edward Rawlings, the treasurer. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Very Rev. A. K. H. Boyd, Mr. Albert Spicer, M.P., and others took part in the meeting. The work of the society is now carried on in 224 languages, and has extended far beyond the original object—"to promote the dispersion of religious tracts." Among the publications of the society are the well-known *Leisure Hour* and *Sunday at Home*. The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804 as an off-shoot of the Religious Tract Society, and in many towns the two societies occupy the same buildings.

At a subsequent meeting in the Queen's Hall, the Right Hon. James Bryce, who presided, spoke of the Religious Tract Society as having had a marked influence for good, both at home and abroad. During the century the population of the United Kingdom had increased from 16,000,000 to 39,000,000; and in 1799 probably not more than half of the population could read and write. Newspapers were few in number and dear in price, magazines were scarcely intended for "the masses," while books were nothing like so plentiful as they are now. To-day we were witnessing a marvellous growth of the taste for reading, and in order to meet it, newspapers, periodicals, books, &c., were multiplied to an astonishing extent. It might be thought that with all this activity in literature, there would be a diminished need for the work of this society, but that was by no means the case. The printing press, like other discoveries, had its admixture of evil, and although the great bulk of modern literature had a healthy tone, yet there was a wide scope for the publication of sound, interesting, and instructive works. It was quite a mistake to suppose that good literature was dull, and there was as much need now as there was a century ago for presenting the

masses of the people with well-written and cheap publications.

At the recent meeting of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches at Bristol, a paper was read by Mr. George Cadbury, one of the treasurers of the Council, on "Free Church Parishes." He urged this plan, by which a town is divided into districts, with a Free Church as the centre of each, for two reasons: first, because they were equally responsible with the Established Churches for the welfare of the neglected among the people, and, secondly, because churches, which are self-centred, lose vitality and decay. "Just as an arm kept in a sling without exercise for a few weeks becomes emaciated and feeble, so these churches have become lifeless and feeble for want of work. Exercise is as needful for a church as for a limb. Idleness brings certain punishment upon a church as upon an individual." And then Mr. Cadbury described how such work had been done before the Council movement began, and how it was now being done with great success in many of the chief towns of the country. "One church in a large Midland town visited over 2,000 houses for four years (1884-8) with a band of seventy-five men and women, each of whom visited an average of twenty-five houses weekly, with an illustrated paper specially prepared, and containing a hearty invitation to attend the services. The result was seen in overflowing congregations, which benefited all the other churches in the neighbourhood."

IN the same paper Mr. Cadbury urged the great importance of such parish work, as finding opportunities of service, especially for young people, who did not perhaps feel able to teach, or engage in other kinds of religious work, but who yet must be set to work if the church is to retain its rightful hold on their allegiance. And he added:—"The 'parish system,' when rightly worked, elevates the whole conception of the relationship of the church to its neighbourhood. 'It is the lamp placed on the lampstand.' Each church should be a centre in its own parish, not only of religious, but also of social, recreative and intellectual life. The building itself and its schoolroom should be used every evening in the week for some good purpose. I know a Free Church, in a village, the population of which is about 8,000, seated with chairs so that it is available for concerts; where there is a men's club, numbering about 240, held in a lower room; also separate clubs for boys and for girls; a mothers' meeting, with an average attendance of about 150; large Sunday-schools both morning and afternoon; and 2,100 meetings, committees,

MEADVILLE

THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

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&c., of one kind or another, were held in this building, during last year."

THE Triennial Conference of the Liberation Society is to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 3 and 4, the annual meeting being on Wednesday evening at the City Temple. It is suggested by the promoters of the movement that Sunday, May 1, should be observed as "Free Church Sunday," and that sermons should be preached on the religious aspects of the movement.

Among the Rossetti pictures at present collected in the New Gallery there is a very striking portrait of Robert Browning. It is a little water-colour, dated October, 1855, the year of the publication of "Men and Women," in two volumes, five years after the appearance of "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," when Browning was forty-three. There is a splendid wealth of hair, a short beard, and clean-shaven upper lip. One sees more of the poet than in some of the later portraits, and especially in the clear beautiful eyes one feels that the poet-painter has given us a likeness of his friend.

THE seventieth birthday of Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian poet, on Sunday last, has been celebrated during the week with national rejoicings in his own country. The President of the Storting conveyed to Dr. Ibsen the thanks of the Norwegian Parliament for what he had done for mankind and civilisation and especially for his own people, and among the messages of congratulation was one from the King. Some of Ibsen's English admirers sent a birthday letter and a gift of old silver.

LAST Saturday evening Mr. G. H. Perris lectured at the Bradford Liberal Club on "The Growth of Armaments." He pointed to the enormous increase in recent years of the cost both of our army and navy, the army claiming in the present year £22,000,000 and the navy £24,000,000, together about two-fifths of the National Budget. And to this must be added the loss of the productive labour of those directly and indirectly employed in these services. The industry of the country could not, in his opinion, bear such a burden, and he deplored the tendency towards a predominance of the military element in Parliament. There ought to be a check put to all aggressive proceedings, and to any further extension of our already over-burdened Empire.

At the annual meeting of the Blackfriars Mission held at 33, New Cut, on Tuesday evening, Mr. C. F. Pearson, who occupied the chair, announced that the amalgamation with Stamford-street Chapel had now been completed, and that from Sunday next, March 27, all the work formerly carried on at the Mission Rooms would be transferred to Stamford-street under the superintendence of the Rev. Frederic Allen. Mr. Pearson referred in earnest and sympathetic terms to the admirable work done by the Mission in the Blackfriars-road district during the last eighteen years, and expressed the hope that in the larger and better equipped premises at Stamford-street the good work would be greatly extended. The public opening of the Blackfriars Church and Mission at Stamford-street will take place on Thursday, April 21, when the Rev.

Stopford A. Brooke will preach in the afternoon at 4 P.M. The evening meeting will be presided over by Sir E. Durning Lawrence, Bart., M.P. The builders will probably complete their work at Stamford-street in about another week. The hon. treasurer, Mr. C. F. Pearson, who has himself generously contributed £200 towards the expenses, will, no doubt, be glad to receive subscriptions which will enable the Committee to open the Church and Mission free of debt.

MR. B. B. NAGARKAR, who had intended to return to India at the end of April, has now determined to pay another visit to the United States before making his way home, and will remain in this country until the end of July. Mr. Nagarkar will therefore be open to further preaching and lecturing engagements during the spring and early summer.

WE regret not to be able to publish the second article on the "Imitation of Christ," by the Rev. W. E. Addis in our present issue. It will appear next week.

ESSEX HALL TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.—The two travelling libraries recently purchased by this Association are now in constant use. The secretaries have prepared a list of affiliated Bands of Hope, with particulars, day, hour, and place of meeting, and name and address of secretary, for use of speakers and visitors, and this will be included in the report to be presented at the annual general meeting on Friday evening, June 3.

ARTICLES IN THE REVIEWS.

IN this month's *Nineteenth Century* Dr. Jessopp concludes the story, which he partly told in January, of "Parish Life in England before the Great Pillage." In the early years of the sixteenth century, he estimates, the parish communities of England must have owned property, including much accumulated treasure of gold and silver vessels, &c., amounting in value to millions of money; and all this disappeared in "the great pillage" of Edward VI.'s reign, the plunder of the monasteries in his father's time being followed by the plunder of the parishes and the old charities during the anarchy which followed. This must not be regarded as a necessary part of the Reformation. "Religion had about as much to do with this business as religion had to do with the September massacres at Paris in 1792. In the latter case the mob went raving mad with the lust of blood; in the former case, the richer classes went raving mad with the lust of gain." So the parish communities were disendowed, only the clergy managing to retain some of their endowments. It remained for the old parish communities to be disestablished, and that, in Dr. Jessopp's view, was accomplished by the Local Government Act of 1894. The same review contains an interesting article by Mr. Claude Phillips on Millais' works, as exhibited at Burlington House, showing his weaknesses, as well as his great strength and versatility, and emphasising his greatness as a portrait painter. "He loves to depict the intellectually and physically strong, who, battling hard with the world and showing its scars in the furrows on brow and cheek, have arisen victorious from the fight, and hold it firmly in their

grasp. Here no painter of the century can be said to have surpassed him. . . . Millais gives us the whole man, with mind and body in perfect balance, with breath in his nostrils as well as speculation in his eyes." Mr. W. S. Lilly writes on "The Methods of the Inquisition," and ends with a parallel between the Inquisitor and the modern vivisector, both eager to secure the truth, at whatever cost of torture to their victims, and both liable to a growing callousness, if not to a taste for the witnessing of sufferings. "We have no right to employ physical torture in order to elicit truth, whether in judicial or scientific investigation. It is an unethical means; and that is the true objection to it in both cases." But Mr. Lilly might have spared the sneer of his foot-note at those who plead for the "rights" of animals. Whatever a superior metaphysician may say, under English law, since the passing of Martin's Act, at any rate certain classes of animals have rights; and the statute law does but partially express a deeper conviction (which Mr. Lilly also appears to share) that there is a right, which is concerned with all sentient creatures capable of acute suffering.

The *Contemporary Review* contains a vigorous article by "A Country Parson" on "The Decline of Tractarianism." The writer admits that the signs of such a decline are not very apparent, and yet he gives good reason for believing that it has actually commenced, and is destined before long to become much more marked. He draws a clear distinction between the original Tractarian movement, in which the most notable figure was that of John Henry Newman, and the later ritualistic development, in which the first prominent figure was that of Mackonochie. The advanced ritualists, who are so prominent at the present time, are characterised by their close imitation of all the outward usages of the Church of Rome, and by their "inclination towards materialism, or, at the least, an exaggerated mediævalism." And then there is a further development among the High Churchmen, represented by Canon Gore, and other *Lux Mundi* writers, who are utterly separated from the old Tractarians on the question of authority in the Church, and avow principles which seem to challenge the decrees of Ephesus and Chalcedon. "The neo-Tractarians of Canon Gore's school have practically cast aside ecclesiastical authority, and have become advocates of an understanding with modern thought." This points, in the writer's view, to a new departure of a very striking kind, though he hesitates to predict what the issue may be. He hopes it may at least be "in the direction of a larger tolerance, upon a wider and more genuinely Catholic basis."

The Rev. J. B. Strong, senior Censor of Christ Church, Oxford, writes in *Cornhill* an appreciative notice of the late "Lewis Carroll," in which he points out that one of Mr. Dodgson's delightful words, to *chortle*, has found a place in Murray's great English dictionary.

Ah! when shall all men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal peace,
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the Golden Year?
—Tennyson.

MIDLAND CHRISTIAN UNION AND
PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY.

THE annual meetings were held on Thursday, March 17, in Newhall Hill Church, Birmingham. Business meeting at 11.30 A.M. Rev. L. P. JACKS, M.A. presided. Reports having been read by the hon. secretary (Rev. A. A. Charlesworth), treasurer (Mr. A. Kenrick), and Missionary Agent (Rev. John Harrison), it was moved by the PRESIDENT and seconded by the Rev. J. C. STREET, that the reports be adopted.

Mr. H. Perry, Rev. J. Wood, Rev. A. W. Timmis and Mr. A. W. Worthington having spoken, a modification of some phrases relating to Wolverhampton was made and the resolution carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the officers and committee was moved by the Rev. E. W. Lummis, seconded by Mr. E. A. Tyndall, and carried unanimously.

A vote of sympathy with Mr. Charles Cochrane, of Stourbridge, in his illness, was moved by the Rev. A. W. TIMMIS, seconded by the Rev. JOSEPH WOOD, and carried unanimously.

An application for membership having been received from the Stratford-on-Avon congregation, it was moved by the Hon. Treasurer, seconded by the Rev. J. Wood, supported by the Rev. E. W. Lummis, and carried unanimously that they be welcomed into the Union. Mr. A. H. Wall replied.

Luncheon was provided for delegates in the Great Western Hotel. In reply to the President, Mr. B. B. Nagarkar, of the Brahmo Somaj, and the Rev. C. J. Street, of Bolton, spoke for the strangers, and the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth and Mr. C. Stych for the hosts.

A conference was held at 3.30 P.M., when the Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., of Bolton, read a paper on

"EQUIPMENT FOR THE MINISTRY."

After some opening passages on the difficulties and the compensations of the ministry, and the desirability of the laymen in our churches bearing the ministry in mind, as an honourable profession for their sons, Mr. Street continued:—

For a well-equipped ministry to meet the needs of our churches to-day, there are certain essential qualifications which the man himself must possess to begin with, and there are certain duties and functions for which our colleges first and our churches afterwards are responsible. I can only briefly allude to some of the chief of these and submit them as a theme for full and useful discussion; and, to guard against possible misapprehension, I beg to remind you that ministers generally preach better than they practice, even as laymen's ideals are higher than their realities.

The very first qualification needed in a student for the ministry is a devout and humble spirit. High aims and intentions should certainly be in his mind; but these are by no means inconsistent with a modest nature, and, indeed, may well be the necessary complement of it. "A man's reach should exceed his grasp; or what's a heaven for?" says Browning. At the heart of religion lies reverence; and no man should deem himself worthy of a place in the ministry whose spirit is not aglow with the thought of God. Without this his ministry can have no

power and bring no blessing either to others or to himself. Above all the minister must be a prophet, a seer of divine things; he must have some clear insight into the spiritual laws of life; his nature must be stirred to its depths by the Holy Spirit of God.

Then the candidate for the ministry needs also to be sympathetic. If he is not touched by a feeling of the infirmities of his brethren; if he cannot mingle his tears with their sorrows, and his laughter with their joys; if he knows not how to struggle with them in their temptations, grieve with them in their lapses, rejoice with them in their triumphs, he will be out of place in the ministry—where love of man is scarcely secondary in importance to love of God. Better far that he should seek some other sphere of work if he is conscious of lack of fellow-feeling! A ministry without heart—without comprehension of the complex nature of men—without care for the woes and throes of our humanity—is worse than useless; it is repellant and mischievous. "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

"Devotion wafts the mind above
But Heaven itself descends in love;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought;
A ray of Him who formed the whole;
A glory circling round the soul."

(Byron: The Giaour.)

One other qualification which the student for the ministry should possess is intellectual ability and receptiveness. The time has long gone by when it was deemed sufficient to dedicate to the Church the fool of the family. I venture to think—with due modesty, of course, excepting present company—that such has never been the tendency with us; and if it had been, our congregations would soon have sent such unsuitable aspirants back to the bosom of their families. We have little reason to complain of the quality of the raw material sent up to our colleges to be prepared and finished. In point of intellectual ability our ministers are, as a rule, capable of holding their own, whether among the members of their congregations or by way of contrast with the clergy and ministers of other denominations. The old days when we had a comparative monopoly of a scholarly ministry are gone beyond recall. There has been a levelling up on the part of other churches, and not a levelling down on our part. And with those old days have gone most of the opportunities of leisurely reading and concentration of study on some special department of knowledge. The conditions of life are changed all round, and the ministry has not escaped being influenced by the new order. Just as business has been quickened in spirit and widened in operation, so the churches have awakened to a sense of their duty, and the demands on a minister's time and energies are much greater than they used to be. There is no use sighing for the old conditions; rather let us be thankful for the energy which shows that our churches are very much alive, and adapt our training for the ministry to the evident needs of this present age. Our men must be able to stand comparison with any other ministry; they must not be in arrear of the intelligence and ability of the members of their congregation; they must be alert and receptive of new and

wider knowledge; but they need not be bookworms, or specialists, or pedants.

Our colleges will take good care that the intellectual side of the student's nature is not left undeveloped. It is their special function to furnish their alumni with necessary knowledge and the means of acquiring it; to cultivate habits of study and research; to awaken and stimulate mental perception; to make thought live and become a constant and appreciable force. The colleges take hold of young aspirants to the office of the ministry at a susceptible and impressionable age. They pre-suppose the existence of a devout and sympathetic spirit, of intellectual capability and moral grit, of spiritual congeniality with the life of our churches, of high ideals and noble aims. Working from this basis, it is their high task to build up a strong, stable, steadfast character; to store the mind with valuable information; to direct it to principles and methods by means of which it will be better fitted to do its own natural work in future; and to train its aptitudes for the special functions of the ministry. It is assumed that the man comes to the college with a message; but that this message may not be without knowledge, it is for the college to give him culture of the right sort. It is necessary that the preacher should be well-informed. That he may be in touch with the great past, insight is given him into the historical developments of religion. That he may realise the communion between God and man and the fundamental unity of the human race, he is made acquainted with the many manifestations of the religious spirit in different climes and among various races, and his sympathy is aroused for every expression of devout aspiration and every reaching out of the soul for truth. That his message may not conflict with evident facts or jar upon the minds of those who have read and thought deeply upon the problems of life, he is familiarised with some of the leading teachings of natural science and with the chief contentions of mental and moral philosophy.

This is good and necessary work, which our colleges have not shirked; nor are they likely ever to do so. It would be a woful day for us if they ceased to maintain a high standard of scholarship; and if only our churches would decline to open their back doors into the ministry, we should in this respect have little to complain of. But scholarliness is not by any means the only essential qualification for a useful and effective ministry, which our colleges can provide. Some of the most scholarly men in the world are the worst possible teachers. They can learn, but they cannot impart their learning. As students they are a brilliant success; as teachers or ministers they are disastrous failures. Look through the ranks of the ministry of religion to-day—not merely in our own group of churches, but in the church at large. It is not always the cleverest men who become the most effective instruments of God's work. There are certain natural gifts and acquired powers which become invaluable in the exercise of the ministry, and these are not always, though happily they are often, associated with the scholarly nature. The colleges cannot create the natural gifts, but they can evoke and train and apply them; and there are specialised powers which the colleges can and ought to furnish, if they are to do their proper work successfully. The danger is that too

close application to one department of work will call away attention from another, no less important, which becomes instant and urgent as soon as the student enters upon the active ministry. Our colleges exist for free learning and free teaching in theology, it is true; and we are proud of this unique fact; but these are only means to an end, which is the suitable and effectual training of young men to become pastors and preachers in our churches. "This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

Do not let it be supposed that I am condemning our theological colleges as neglecting their work. I have had the honour to be a student of one of them, and owe very much to the tuition and guidance which I there received. But that is all the better reason for being jealous that our colleges which we love shall be awake to the needs of our times and respond to the urgent and increasing demand of our churches. There is no good in blinking facts. Whatever be the reason, the standard of preaching is not what it ought to be in our churches; pastoral work is not as thoroughly and systematically done as it once was; our ministry does not take the part in public life that it should do. Does the fault lie wholly with the men themselves? I think not; for I have already said that in my opinion the raw material from which our ministry is made is as good as ever it was.

The times, it is true, are changed; but we should change with them and adapt our methods to them. And upon our colleges, in the first instance, and upon our churches, in the second, lies the chief responsibility for responding to the call of our own age.

What can the colleges do towards equipping their students for the practical work of the ministry? They can at least make it as clear as daylight that they regard it as their chief and most sacred function to prepare their students not merely to be free theologians, but to be serviceable ministers of religion. Happily, they are realising more than they ever did the obligations in this respect which rest upon them; and Mr. Henry Tate's generous and wise-minded benefactions have enabled two of them to begin the work of amelioration. You have reason to be proud that from your own ranks has been chosen the first Tate Lecturer at Manchester College, Oxford; and I can imagine no man more fitted for the splendid work which he is so well doing than Mr. Wood. But remember—and let the fact give occasion for reflection—Mr. Wood is not a product of one of our colleges. The fact that for the appointment of the first Lecturer on the art of preaching and the practical training for the ministry a gentleman should be chosen who came to us from the Congregational body is significant, and may be read alongside of another fact (as I believe it to be) that other Nonconformist bodies are ahead of us in preaching power and pastoral efficiency.

The colleges have wisely set themselves to teach voice production, and it is to be hoped that no student will in future leave his Alma Mater without having been trained to use his voice judiciously and effectively. But mechanical art is not everything, and there are those among us who have rich and sonorous voices, but depress us with lugubrious and soporific tones. The scientific specialist can teach

our students how to make the most of nature's gifts of speech in respect of fullness and modulation of tone, and husbanding of strength; but the art of preaching can only be taught by a preacher—and not every eloquent preacher can impart to others the secret of his own success. Oxford has led the way in introducing this reform, and not a day too soon; let the other colleges follow speedily. There is reason to believe that one, at least, is not unmindful of the need.

Pastoral work is quite as important a ministerial function as preaching. The colleges can impart the theory by means of the wise guidance of an experienced man still engaged in the active ministry. Even this has not been done in the past as it should have been, and many of our ministers have had to pick up their ideas of organisation and method, and worldly wisdom as best they could, and at the expense of their first pastorate. Oh! those first ministries! What a tale they could unfold of our blind blunderings and hard-learned lessons! The students of this generation are more highly favoured than were some of us, in that they are forewarned and forearmed about some of the duties and difficulties which beset every minister in the performance of his work. But an ounce of fact is supposed to be worth a pound of theory; and participation, even in student days with the full sanction and encouragement of the college, in the practical work of Sunday-school teaching, district visiting and society organisation, will give a wonderful insight into the kind of qualities which will be required for a useful and productive ministry. Theory and practice in association are best. The Home Missionary College, in Manchester, has realised this, and encourages its students to work in connection with one or other of the busy congregations and schools.

I have not left myself much time to speak of what our churches can do to help in the equipment of our students for the ministry, and I am afraid I may have wearied your patience as it is. But there are a very few words which I must speak to show the tendency and intention of my suggestions. The churches themselves cannot shake off their share of responsibility for any failure there may be in our ministry. To begin with, they have the utmost freedom of choice, and if the choice is unwise it is their own fault. Especially in regard to moral failures, which happily are not of frequent occurrence in our ministerial ranks, a more judicious procedure and careful investigation into the antecedents of men would have spared us some of the disasters we deplore. There are too many easy ways of slipping into the ministry, to the detriment of its character and tone.

Then the churches so often expect to find the student's education finished when he leaves college, and are surprised that he has so much to learn at the expense of his congregation. Finished! Yes, the student himself is apt to think so when he tucks his college certificate under his arm and goes forth, a mighty man of valour, to astonish his first congregation. This is part of the valuable conceit inseparable from youth. But if he has a sound heart, he will soon find that his higher education is only beginning. He has some things to unlearn, many things to forget, and of still more he has yet to master the rudiments. Humbly he begins to take his

right place on one of the lowest rungs of the ladder, and slowly and painfully climbs into ampler life. This, at least, represents the average man; there are exceptionally gifted or specially trained men who are more fortunate, and who are so adaptable as to be able to fit themselves at once into the life of a church, and begin forthwith a successful and efficient ministry. But for the majority it is not so. They have to learn through much tribulation. If it were only their own, one could see compensations and even think it well. But the congregations suffer also, and many of them can ill-afford to do so. They have difficulties enough of their own already, without the new minister making more for them. Some of them find it hard enough to live, and the strain may by such an experience be brought to the breaking point; and then comes another sad chapter of history—another closed chapel perhaps added to our list.

Now, if it is not desirable for the sake of the man or of the church that he should make a beginning of his ministry at the expense of his congregation, what can be done to obviate such a fatality, and yet enable him to get his necessary experience? The answer is not far to seek. The remedy lies with our stronger churches, which are quite able, and should be willing, to give an opportunity to these young spirits ready and eager for work. The larger the field of operations the better, for it will give the richer experience. The Church of England teaches us a valuable lesson in this respect. Its curacies are a most helpful part of the training of the clergy. Fresh from college the young men come, full of great schemes and ardent hopes; and they are set to work under the experienced guidance of older men who can direct into the most useful channels the energies which are capable of so much good. It is true that they still learn to some extent at the expense of others; but they have a wise and kindly friend to whom they may appeal for counsel and help, and who can at an early stage check erratic and injudicious tendencies before they can work havoc among the people. And, moreover, it is not the small and weaker churches who cannot afford to be thrown into confusion, but the large and stronger churches whose equilibrium would not so easily be disturbed, that present these desirable opportunities for initial service.

Here is the practical suggestion with which I conclude. Let our wealthier congregations arouse themselves to their responsibilities towards the equipment of our ministers by establishing curacies in their own midst, in which for a couple of years a college-trained man may learn the practical side of his sacred profession. Let our rich laymen institute, as some of them have already done, fellowships to be held by students of one or other of our colleges, enabling them to work for a definite period in one of our busy centres under the supervision of an experienced minister. This seems to me to be the direction in which we may most hopefully look for the fuller equipment of our able and willing young men for the ministry; and if this method were generally adopted we should hear fewer complaints about the weakness of churches and the inefficiency of our ministers.

The paper was discussed by Mr. G. Bassett, the Rev. Joseph Wood (Tate Lec-

turer), Mr. H. Perry, the Rev. E. W. Lummis, Mr. Oliver, the Rev. J. C. Street, Mr. J. Lucas and the President.

After the Rev. C. J. Street had replied, a vote of thanks was proposed by the Hon. SECRETARY, seconded by the Rev. P. DEAN, and heartily accorded.

A Devotional Service was held at 7.30, which the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth conducted. The sermon, which was preached by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., LL.D., will be found on page 201.

An "Impression."

If three intelligent men, strangers to our work and ways, and bent on inquiry, had strayed severally into the three meetings held by the Midland Christian Union on Thursday, March 17, they must needs have borne away sharply contrasted ideas of what we are and do. When they compared notes they would probably find little in common beyond this, that Unitarians are very much alive and in earnest, and their meetings are of vivid and sustained interest.

In the morning, as behoved business men, we left our common faith and hope, and even the general aims and politics which root therein, to be tacitly assumed, while we spoke only to practical points of detail and finance. First the secretary, in that stirring philippic which it amused him to call a report, and then the Rev. John Harrison, in his admirably clear, full and condensed summary, sent our thoughts flickering here and there over "those fair Midland fields," not to mention the Black Country, in giddy and bewildering dance. When they had done we gathered ourselves together, looked at the clock, made a hasty selection of one or two isolated points of predominant interest, and discussed them with inhuman (but business-like) brevity. Indeed, it was a compelled virtue. For these last two years our friends on the Treasury Bench have used so much time in laying their Bills before the House that a full debate would have left no room for lunch. To rise before a throng of unfed, hungry gentlemen, in order to raise controversial issues and protract discussion, requires more than the courage of an Irish member.

Wolverhampton has long been a point of painful interest to Midland Unitarians. A long and patient series of efforts has met with so very modified a success that if effort were now to cease we should call the whole movement a failure. Nobody has yet diagnosed the cause of this ill-success. Naturally enough the faithful workers in the congregation perceive a lack of external help, and external helpers grow discouraged by the small degree of self-help at Snow Hill. The "report" of our secretary, Mr. Charlesworth—whose valour is less tempered than that of Sir John Falstaff—expressed the latter feeling in terms more stimulating than sympathetic. Mr. Street, of Shrewsbury, in seconding the adoption, asked for a softening of those clauses, which he called "whips of steel." Mr. Charlesworth opined that in some stages of a church's history "a little steel is not to be deprecated." But Mr. Perry, one of the Abdiel group at Wolverhampton, and Mr. Worthington and Mr. Wood, with all the elders, united in deprecating it now. There was a brief conference behind the Speaker's chair, and, as Our London Correspondent saith, the incident closed. Our friends at Wolverhampton are going to

sell their church, organise a Napoleonic *coup*, and focus all their resources into one resolute assault; and may they reap at last the long-awaited success. They have (I speak as one who knows) the goodwill of all the sister churches in our free company, and not less of the M.C.U. Committee and its out-spoken secretary.

We have lately been very full of pæans concerning Small Heath. An unhappy little piece of news came but now, to mar our triumph. Mr. Johnson, exposing himself too recklessly in the van, has taken a wound and been invalidated away. Our president, whose *idée fixe* is the protection of young ministers from too much preaching, had lectured us thereon at the previous annual meeting; how could he forego this chance of pointing his moral and adorning his tale? But the real trouble with Mr. Johnson is not so much brain-wear as nerve wear; he has felt, in a degree which does him honour, the responsibility of his new work. We hope he may evolve the temperament which gives off its waste all in work and none in worry. I am glad to hear that he is already better for his rest.

Another invalid with whom our sympathy expressed itself is Mr. Charles Cochrane, of Stourbridge. His name was first mentioned by the secretary and treasurer, who told us that it was to his splendid generosity, and that alone, that the increase in our income was due. It needed not this immediate reminder of Mr. Cochrane's munificence to evoke our sorrowful, but hopeful, sympathy when Mr. Timmis told us how seriously ill he was, for there are better qualities than the combined power and will to use money well, and some of us know how ready to spend himself, as well as his gear, Mr. Cochrane has always been.

I had the privilege of delivering that lecture, the last of a series, after which the church at Stratford-on-Avon was formed, and of conducting the first religious service which they held. I could not refrain from striking in—though we were then at our hungriest and briefest—when the new congregation was welcomed into the Union. Meeting under the most adverse external conditions, this vigorous, united, and quietly earnest society gives promise of permanence and growth. The scheme for helping to establish and endow in this literary capital a world's pulpit of inclusive godliness is surely not abandoned. I have faith in that germinal idea, and look to see a great tree come of it, free to wind and wing.

Lectures are being delivered for the sowing of seed at Stafford. Mr. Harrison—into whose capacious department this movement falls, together with the pastoral charge of Wolverhampton and Stratford; the supply, moreover, of Alcester; the oversight, as official visitor, of the aided churches; the conduct of the Lay Preachers' Association, and other labours too numerous to mention—hopes "to make some good Christians hold their own creeds henceforth a little less dogmatically, and the others, already dissatisfied with orthodox creeds, will discover that in such churches as ours they may find a religious home." Work undertaken in this spirit need not despair of a blessing, even though no success of any tangible kind reward it.

After our lunch, which was decorated with speeches by our welcome Indian guest, Mr. Nagarkar, and Mr. C. J. Street, of Bolton, we returned into quite another

atmosphere. Throughout the afternoon, saving ten minutes from a *grimacier*, who mistook the occasion, we were delighted by the high level of the discussion which followed Mr. Street's admirable paper. The Tate Lecturer assured us, with glowing eloquence, that our preachers lack eloquence and glow. He championed against whosoever should belittle him, the importance of the preacher, and gave a kindly pat to the preacher's bicycle. With equal power, and in an even higher strain, the reader's father, Mr. Street, of Shrewsbury and the neighbouring counties, turned to us the obverse of the shield; traced the springs of forceful character; showed us how to read here and there a page pregnant, if obscure, in the great book of humanity. If I should seek to reproduce these speeches my labour were in vain, for the editorial guillotine already looms too nigh. Those who were privileged to hear them will re-read Mr. C. J. Street's paper with a richer store of enlightening comment at their command.

At the evening service, when Mr. Stopford Brooke preached, the chapel was well filled, but, strange to say, not over-crowded. I am glad to know that the sermon is to be preached in your columns to a wider audience, with more leisure to linger over its all too wealthy periods.

E. W. LUMMIS.

BELFAST: DOMESTIC MISSION.

The annual meeting of the Mission in Stanhope-street, Belfast, was held in the Central Hall, Rosemary-street, on March 14. After tea the chair was taken by Mr. James Davidson (Windsor), and the attendance, which was fairly large, included the Revs. S. A. Steinthal (Manchester), Douglas Walmsley, E. I. Fripp, W. J. Davies, W. Weatherall, W. Napier (Clough), J. A. Kelly, G. H. Patterson; Messrs. D. Bulmer, C. Gordon, F. F. Patterson, R. Dickson, C. M. Cunningham, James McWilliams and Charles Lowry.

After hymn and prayer, the CHAIRMAN conveyed the thanks of the meeting to the Rev. S. A. Steinthal, who had preached on behalf of the Mission on the preceding day, speaking at the First Church in the morning, and at All Souls in the evening. Mr. Steinthal replied in an earnest and helpful speech, commending the Mission work to the support of the meeting. It exemplified to the utmost possible extent the spirit of Christianity, and as such all who called themselves Christians were bound to take an interest in it. Like all really good work, it was not an easy task. The work was surrounded by many difficulties; but he did not think the happiest life was spent just in doing easy things, and when they had a really difficult task calling for the highest exercise of all their faculties, and when they devoted themselves to the work with earnest faith, God would help to a successful issue. The Domestic Mission had in view the object of bringing souls back and letting them know the blessedness of reunion with God.

Miss BRUCE read the report of Committee, which stated that on January 11, 1898, the Committee received a letter from Mr. Patterson, their missionary, resigning his appointment in April. The following resolution was passed:—"That this Committee, while accepting Mr. Patterson's resignation of his office as missionary to

the poor of Belfast, desire to express their sense of the high character he has borne and of the fidelity with which he has discharged his duties. They accept his resignation with much regret, and heartily wish him success in his new sphere of work." The Committee have not yet made arrangements with regard to a future missionary. The Ladies' Committee report that they have met seven times during the winter months, and the Relief Committee weekly on Wednesday at 11.30. The missionary has always been present to report on cases requiring assistance. The Sewing Guild has been liberally supported. Mrs. C. M. Cunningham has kindly acted as treasurer, and has received donations of clothes and a subscription of 1s. from each of thirty-six ladies. This money has been used as a boot and shoe fund. The congregational tea meeting was held on December 29, the cost being met by a special subscription among the friends of the Mission. To the ladies who contributed to this fund and who helped in other ways to make the meeting a pleasant one the Committee return their sincere thanks. Miss E. M'Tear, treasurer of the provident fund, reports for 1897:—"Our provident fund has not been as successful in 1897 as in former years with regard to the number of depositors and sum collected. This is partly due to bad times through the long-continued strikes. £303 0s. 5d. was collected in 1897—£18 7s. 4d. less than in 1896. The number of depositors was 343—42 less than in 1896.

The CHAIRMAN submitted the treasurer's statement of accounts, which was of a satisfactory nature.

Mr. PATTERSON, the missionary, read his report for the year. It set forth that much had been done, but that a great deal remained to be accomplished. Considerable demands had been made upon the relief fund, and the utmost care had been taken to observe the strictest economy, while at the same time an endeavour had been made to meet the greatest possible need.

Addresses were afterwards delivered by Rev. W. Napier of Clough; Revs. E. I. Frupp, W. J. Davies, W. Weatherall, and D. Walsley of Belfast; Rev. J. A. Kelly of Dunmurry; and Messrs. C. M. Cunningham and C. Gordon.

A cordial vote of thanks was passed to the Chairman for his many services to the Mission, and the meeting was closed with the Benediction.

BLACKFRIARS MISSION.

THE 18th annual meeting was held on Tuesday evening last at the Mission Room, New Cut. The attendance of friends and subscribers was small but representative. The treasurer, Mr. C. F. Pearson, presided, and among those present were the Revs. W. Copeland Bowie and T. E. M. Edwards, Mr. S. S. Tayler, Miss Preston, Mrs. Bowie, Mrs. Crocker, and Messrs. I. S. Lister, R. J. Gregg, A. H. Biggs, and A. A. Tayler, &c.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, alluded to the fact of it being the last meeting in the premises, in which during the last eighteen years so much good and useful work had been accomplished, and in conclusion read his report

as treasurer, showing that the balance due to him at the end of 1896 had been considerably reduced, although it still amounted to the sum of £104 7s. 8d. He then called on Mr. Percy Preston (secretary) to read the report of the Committee for the year 1897. This was of a most interesting character, detailing a great variety of useful work.

The adoption of the report was moved by the Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE, seconded by Mr. S. S. TAYLER, and supported by Mr. R. J. GREGG, each bearing testimony to the excellent work which had been done since the Mission was commenced in the New Cut, and specially thanking the Treasurer for his kind and generous help.

The CHAIRMAN responded, and referring to the balance due at the end of the year, said it would be a pleasure to Mrs. Pearson and himself if the friends would consider that sum as no longer existing, and thus enable the new condition of things, shortly to be inaugurated at Stamford-street, to start without an adverse balance.

The Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE said that it was difficult to speak of Mr. Pearson's kindness and generosity, for he had also paid the whole of the cost of the new heating apparatus at Stamford-street: but he felt all would join with him in expressing the sincere thanks which they felt to Mr. and Mrs. Pearson for their great kindness. This was done with much applause.

The CHAIRMAN said he felt that he ought to speak of the good work which had been performed by the various ministers who had carried on the work since 1880, and to them their hearty thanks should be given, and also a cordial welcome to Mr. Allen, with whom in former days it had been his pleasure to work for five or six years at Kentish Town; he was sure all present would join with him in doing so.

The Rev. FREDERIC ALLEN, in replying, thanked Mr. Pearson for his kind references to himself and their past association in Sunday-school work, and moved that the thanks of the subscribers be given to the ladies who conducted the business of the provident bank and mothers' meeting in so able and efficient a manner, to which he could testify by what he had already seen of their labours; also to all the workers, who so earnestly and zealously carried on the work of the Sunday-school, the Band of Hope, young women's club, boys' brigade and the other institutions.

The Rev. W. C. BOWIE, in seconding, added the name of Mr. Percy Preston to those who should receive their thanks, and spoke of the faithful and devoted service he, as secretary, had rendered for the past eighteen years. It was with great regret that they had heard of Mr. Preston's resignation of that office, due to pressure of other important duties and the state of his health, but they were glad to know he would still remain on the Committee. The resolution was heartily supported by Mr. S. S. Tayler, who testified, as a member of the Committee, to the admirable manner in which Mr. Preston had always fulfilled his duties as the secretary of Blackfriars Mission.

Mr. PERCY PRESTON responded, thanking them for the resolution they had just passed, and said the work he had performed had been one in which he had taken, and still took, the deepest interest.

On the motion of Mr. A. H. BIGGS, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. C. F. Pearson for presiding.

The CHAIRMAN, in reply, said he hoped that the blessing of God would be upon their labour in the new buildings into which they were entering, as he believed it had been on the work they had carried on for so many years in the Blackfriars Mission.

CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

THE meetings of the University Nonconformist Union this term have been exceptionally interesting. On Sunday, February 13, a paper on "The Recently-Discovered Sayings of Christ" was read by the Master of St. John's College, who stated that, while he was inclined to doubt the genuineness of the "Sayings," he considered them as valuable evidence on some disputed problems of early Church history. On February 20, Mr. Albert Spicer, M.P., delivered an address on "The Position of Nonconformist Laymen in our National Life." Mr. Spicer quoted statistics which prove that there are more Nonconformists than Churchmen engaged in actively religious work in England, and declared that it is the duty of Free Churchmen to fight against the pressing evils of the times. He held that the Established Church, the landlord, and the liquor traffic are at present the three great obstacles to the progress of the nation. On February 27, Mr. A. Fotheringham, of Emmanuel College, in a paper on "The Headship of the Church in the Middle Ages," described the gradual development of the idea of the Papal supremacy. Last Sunday (March 6) Mr. H. Stanley Jevons, B.A., of Trinity College, read a paper on "The Future of Religion in England," declaring that religion must change with the changes in the social condition of the race, but that there are no signs of any possibility of its decay. The President of the Society for next term is Mr. A. E. C. Franklin, B.A., of Trinity College.

PEACE, BE STILL.

HE sleeps amid the raging of the wave,
While the deep plunges and the loud
winds rave,
"Master, we perish. O awake and save."

Ah, fearful mariners! Put back your
plea,
O ye of little faith, who cannot see
In this his quiet your security.

Why look ye for the lesser miracle?
Not thus is laid the tempest. Whoso
will,
Asleep with him, may bid the winds be
still.
—Ambrose Bennett.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

[TO PUBLISHERS.—All Books, &c., sent to THE INQUIRER will be acknowledged under this head, with name of publisher and price, if supplied. The necessities of our space, however, compel us to limit the number selected for critical notice and review.]

Natural Religion. By F. Max Müller. 5s. (Longmans.)

History of England under Henry the Fourth. By J. H. Wylie, M.A. 21s. (Longmans.)

English Illustrated, Woman at Home.

OBITUARY.

MR. PHILIP BARKER.

IN the death of Mr. Philip Barker, in his eighty-fourth year, which occurred on the morning of the 11th inst., the church at Nantwich loses its oldest member and foremost officer. There has passed away in him the last of a family which has had an important influence on the history and well-being of this congregation. It is about one hundred years ago since the father of the deceased became a settled worshipper in the Nantwich Chapel. He was a Churchman—a churchwarden—but having occasion to disagree with his rector he resigned his wardenship and ceased to attend the church.

Being of a devout and thoughtful turn of mind, he felt deeply the need of another religious home. He visited the various places of worship in the town, ours among the rest. Here he was so much impressed by preacher and service that he settled, and brought with him his family of eight, five of whom became more or less active members of the church.

The subject of this notice was the youngest of the family. He received his education in a school kept by the Rev. James Hawkes, the minister at that time. He also imbibed the Unitarian teaching of that worthy divine, and, as he grew up to manhood, he came to be firmly convinced that Unitarianism was reasonable and right, to which conviction he has remained staunch and true down to the hour of his death.

Very early we find him engaged in Sunday-school work as teacher, then secretary, then superintendent, and by the time he was little over thirty years of age he was appointed acting trustee and treasurer for chapel and school—a post which he held for fifty-one years. All through his long life he manifested the deepest interest in the chapel. He remained at his post through many varying periods of congregational success and depression, and, as the years went on, his financial aid gradually increased.

Mr. Barker was a Liberal in politics and took great interest in education; but the taking of public positions was most distasteful to him. Though he would occasionally take a place on a platform, or conduct a service in the chapel, yet his nature shrank instinctively from publicity.

He was of a very retiring disposition; was exceedingly just and reliable in all his dealings. His natural reticence and reserve kept him out of society and from having many associates or making intimate friends. His life was lived quietly, temperately, and unostentatiously. Of course, any demonstration of the inner religious life was utterly repugnant to such a nature. So very retiring and reserved was he it seemed that he was

"Amidst his own

A stranger oft, companionless and lone."

But those who were nearest knew that in Nature, in his books, and pondering over devotional literature, he had companionship with "Him who seeth in secret."

He had not been well for some few weeks, but able to get downstairs to lunch. During the night of the 10th inst. he felt rather more restless than usual, and by 7.30 the following morning spasm of the heart caused a cessation of bodily

life, and, without warning or struggle, the spirit of our old and dear friend passed away as he had lived—in peace. His earthly toil is over; he needs no longer the refreshment of bodily repose; he enters the rest of perfect trust, and the peace of endless love.

J. M. M.

THE CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

I WANT to tell you to-day about a little book which I have been reading and have enjoyed very much. It has got a French title,* but it is all English, and is a collection of twenty-six short addresses to children, by a minister who always gives a few minutes of his morning service on Sundays to the children. In his congregation there are a good many Board-school and Sunday-school teachers, and when he tells them beautiful things the teachers tell them again to the children of their schools. And now, perhaps, some of you will like to get the book, and then his stories will go further still. They will do good to anyone who hears them.

One of the addresses is about "Fun," and this is part of what Mr. Snell says:—

We should all agree that it is a very good thing to be happy: as the children's poet sang—

The world is so full of a number of things,
I think we should all be as happy as kings.

But children are apt sometimes to say, "Your good boys never have any fun; they don't seem to know how to have fun; your good boys aren't so smart as bad boys somehow!" It all depends what you mean by the word *smart*. I suppose it means "clever." Does it? Well, just think of that a moment. Are bad people cleverer than good people, I wonder?

The master of a prison once told me that the prisoners he had under his control were not very clever. The average criminal is of a very low intellectual type. Cunning? Ah! But cunning is not a very high quality after all. It has often been said that a rascal will work twice as hard to steal a shilling as an honest man will to earn ten. After all, is the bad man clever?

What would you think if I were to say, "Well, it is just as easy to give a right answer to a question as a wrong one!" "Nonsense," you would say, "everyone can answer wrongly, but it takes a *boy* to answer rightly, I can tell you." Exactly. But what is wrong-doing but giving a wrong answer to the questions of life? The cleverest people are not the worst people; nor are bad boys likely to be the cleverest boys—depend upon it! I believe, indeed, what Socrates taught us all, that men are wicked because it seems to them to be the easiest road to follow. It is not in the long run. No! "The way of transgressors is hard." But it *seems* easy, and that is the mistake.

But "your good boys do not seem to enter into the 'fun' of things." Don't they? Now what do you mean by "*fun*"? Of course there is often "*fun*" which is not at all funny in its results, that have more tears than laughter in them. If "*fun*" means mischief, annoyance to other people, or cruelty to any living thing, well, I am not at all sorry that any boy whom I love should be afraid of that.

* "Le Bon Dieu, and other Addresses to Children." By the Rev. Bernard J. Snell, M.A., B.Sc. First series. (William Cave and Co., 17, Farringdon-street, E.C.) Price 2s. net.

It is poor "fun" that. "Afraid!" you say. "I am not afraid a bit." Aren't you? I am sorry for that. There are two kinds of fear. The fear of the coward, which is the most miserable thing, and the fear of the hero, which is the noblest thing this side of Heaven's gates. That is the fear of dishonour and disgrace, the fear to do a mean thing, or to cause another pain.

Good children enjoy far more than bad children. Have you ever felt, "Well, this is a very nice thing to be doing, and generally I like to do it very much indeed, but somehow just now—! What is it? Well, I ought not to be playing cricket this morning. I know I ought not to be reading this book just now, and I did like it so yesterday." Do you know what that means? An uneasy consciousness that one is doing wrong takes ever so much delight away. And have you never felt like this? "Well, I *am* glad I did that, after all, I didn't know it would be half so jolly, and now everything seems like sunshine."

And Mr. Snell finishes his address with a story about three boys who were staying with an uncle at the seaside. One day they were left to themselves, and he told them that when he came back in the evening he would give a cricket bat to the one who could spell *man* best. They wondered what he could mean by that, but they had to wait for the evening to find out. Then they had to tell their uncle how they had spent the day.

"Well, Bobby," he said, "have you had a good day?"

"Yes, uncle—at least, no—o—no. I climbed over the cliff. I knew I oughtn't to have done it, because aunt told me not to. But Jimmy came along, and dared me to do it, and I hate to have anyone dare me to do anything, so I did it."

"Well, Charlie," said uncle, "have you been a good boy?"

"Well, we have had a very good time; but we should have had a much better if it hadn't been for Joe. We meant to have had the boat all to ourselves, but when we got down to it Joe saw the girls were in the boat, and he wouldn't turn them out."

"Stop a minute, stop a minute!" said uncle, "that belongs to Joe to tell."

And Joe said, "I thought it was the girls' turn, uncle, and I didn't like to have them turned out. And I spoke to one of the boatmen, and he said it wasn't very fair."

Then in a moment out came the cricket bat from somewhere, and was put into Joe's hands. He had spelt *man* best; for, as their uncle told them, there are many ways of spelling it, not with letters, but by deeds.

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LONDON, MARCH 26, 1898.

RELIGION AND DOCTRINE.

"THE Vitality of Christian Dogmas and their Power of Evolution" was the subject of a lecture delivered by Dr. SABATIER, Dean of the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Paris, at the opening of a course on "Reformed Dogmatics." The lecture is now introduced to English readers in a separate form, with a preface by the Dean of Ripon.* It was in part embodied in Dr. SABATIER'S "Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion," recently so fully dealt with by the Rev. C. B. UPTON in these columns; but it is worthy of separate consideration, and may well find its way into many hands unable to obtain possession of the larger work.

It is of the utmost importance to be clear as to the right relation of doctrine to religion, and Dr. SABATIER'S lecture is rich in stimulus to thought, and in the guidance of a sound wisdom.

Dogma, he says, is the language of faith. What words and sentences are to thought, dogmatic formulas are to the religious experience of the conscience. But thoroughly to understand a doctrine it must not be studied merely in a creed or formal confession of faith. There it is a dead thing—lying motionless in a kind of tomb—like a word in a dictionary. To understand language you do not merely study a dictionary; you must feel the power of words as they are used in living eloquence. And so with dogmas. In the creed they are found in their state of fixity, "in the form of irreproachable and frozen orthodoxy."

* "The Vitality of Christian Dogmas and their Power of Evolution: A Study in Religious Philosophy." By A. Sabatier, D.D. Translated by Mrs. E. Christen. With a preface by the Very Rev. the Hon. W. H. Fremantle, D.D., Dean of Ripon. A. and C. Black. Price 1s. 6d.

But watch them in the daily practice of individual or public piety; listen to the prayers which rise from hearts moved by feeling; note what each believer finds in them or adds on his own account to these venerable and customary expressions of religion; catch them in their flight, so to say, in popular sermons, in the teaching of the young, in daily practical applications, and you will be quite surprised to find these apparently hieratical formulas so easy, so undulating, so rich in meaning and in shade, and susceptible of so many interpretations.

Thus Dogma is felt to be a living thing, and we should say that it ought not, in fact, to be called dogma at all, but only doctrine, since by dogma is strictly to be understood that which is fixed and imposed by external authority.

Dr. SABATIER points out with great force the mistake of the Church of Rome in claiming infallibility and dogmatic authority. This, he says, is a defiance thrown in the face of history. Every definition of the orthodox creed was the result of a growing process of thought, the end of a controversy, which had so to be settled as a practical question amid the religious conditions of the time. But in our time the modes of thought are different, and the expressions of doctrine must be different. Whoever proclaims the infallibility of the creed at the same time proclaims the infallibility of ARISTOTLE'S logic and PLATO'S philosophy. This was possible in the Middle Ages, and may still be possible in a church that insists on measuring its thought and its practice by the habit of the Middle Ages; but the living spirit of Christian faith cannot be permanently held in such bondage. Nor is it in the form of thought alone that change is inevitable. The matter of thought is also largely changed since modern science has given us a new heaven and a new earth. The creed is wrapped up with the old cosmogony. The Fall of Man, the descent into hell, the resurrection of the body, the visible ascension into heaven, are examples of doctrines of which science has compelled a revision.

Doctrine, then, must be recognised as having life, as being an essential part of religion, essential to its full expression, but no doctrinal statement must be imposed as final, as infallible dogma.

In life, the awakening of feeling always precedes that of thought. And so religion exists as emotion, or sentiment, or vital instinct, before it is transformed either into intellectual notions or into rites. This primary and inner emotion is so truly the life of religion, that where it no longer exists, be it in the most correct dogmas or the most magnificent worship, there is no longer any true religion.

The primary emotion of religion was in the sense of dependence, of being in the presence of Another, who had power over man. The first thoughts of God were very crude, but there was that recognition of Another. And this remains our religion, to be expressed in the terms of our own thought—our knowledge of life. Life with God, the life of a child with the Eternal Father, the life of one who has learnt of the

spirit of CHRIST, who knows reverence and trust and love—that is at the heart of religion for us to-day. And our doctrine has to speak of this with all the fulness and clearness of which we are capable. The life of our religion must be expressed in doctrine, that we may fully know it for ourselves, and speak of it to others. But if we are wise we do not make our doctrine into dogma.

THE MINISTRY OF A FREE CHURCH.—II.

It is the whole church that must minister, in the fellowship of united worship, and in the service of each individual life. This it is to which the members of a church are pledged, when they fully realise the privilege and the responsibility of their membership. They who desire thus to be with God, to be strong in His strength, and to minister to others in a true companionship of that strength and of the peace and joy of the deeper life, have a great and holy calling, and yet, by the grace of God, one in which all may have a part—the simplest and the most unlearned, even the little child who begins to understand trust and love, as true a part as any other; and there is no surer happiness than is given to those who feel that they have part in such a union, and in all simplicity and humbleness of heart give themselves to that service.

It must be with humility and the joy of self-surrender that we come together in our union for worship and the strengthening of the bonds of brotherhood. There is nothing more incongruous in a church than conceit. There is no place there for jealousy or impatience or any form of ill-temper, or for noisy irreverence.

There is an earnestness of purpose in those who come together in the true spirit, an inwardness of thought which makes the quietness of the place of prayer. In such preparation of earnest and reverent thought and in a true participation in the service, each one has something to add to the life in the church and its power of helpfulness. If at the time of public worship his place is empty, the church is so much the poorer and the weaker; and if his place is filled, but not in the true spirit, the church is so far corrupted, and more dangerously weakened than by his absence. But each one can help, through the silent energy of a soul seeking the Divine presence, rising up in aspiration and thanksgiving, and in brotherly love dedicated to a true unselfish service.

The custom of our churches in the order and character of their public worship lays a very great responsibility on him who is called in a special sense the minister. But it is the silent power of brotherhood, and union in the hidden life with God, by which the highest work of the church is done. The words spoken from the pulpit may

help; it is sad for the church and shame to the minister if they do not help. They may help especially to make clear true forms of thought, and to open channels through which the full stream of life may flow. But it is in the minds and hearts of the gathered people that the life must be, and without their most earnest and active participation little of any worth can be accomplished. If a church is to prosper and be true to its high calling, it is they who must seek together a larger measure of the true spirit of worship, seeking of God, who alone can give—asking and expecting great blessings, such as the heavenly Father delights to give. But this preparing of the heart is not a matter of the Sunday only, or of the hour before service and the time of gathering for united worship. Such energy of spirit in the true life with God, as belongs to common worship, to be enjoyed and imparted to others in their need, cannot be generated out of empty or worldly lives. The spirit that has been dead all the week, and forgetful of God and the deeper things of His truth and righteousness, cannot of its own will suddenly produce the finer gifts which are needed for true worship, or fit itself to receive the richer blessings.

The power of prayer is in the life of prayer—the life, that is, which is every day and through the day mindful of God—morning and evening, at noon-day and in the silence of the night, aware of the holier Presence, unseen but not unmanifest, in the simple things of daily duty, in the temper of every day, in the home and at business, and in all the casual intercourse of life—in all the changing scenes of nature, in storm and sunshine, in beauty and in the hard things of life; in the trials not less than in the pleasures of our ordinary lot. It is not any far-off mystical quality of soul that is required for the first steps in the true life of worship, but the simple reverence and thankfulness of a plain, straightforward man. In honest dealing and good temper, in the hearty enjoyment of all blessings and freedom from base self-indulgence, in a frank loyalty and reverent thankfulness are the preparations for prayer—taking all these simple but essential things of a true human life as what they are, gifts of the Eternal Goodness, to be accepted and used as a trust for the common good and in the joyful service of the Most High.

The union of such lives in lowly quietness, in the presence of God, prepares the way for the gladness and power of true worship in the hour of prayer, and out of this must spring the strength of ministry which a living church will always exercise.

CERTAINLY it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.—Bacon.

THE PULPIT.

THE IDEAL OF THE KINGDOM.*

BY THE

REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A., LL.D.

Now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known.—1 Cor. xiii. 12.

THERE is a story somewhere of a royal race, to one of the ancestors of which a wise magician made a promise that, at some time in the future when the kingdom had need of it, a sage should come, bringing with him a great diamond, so pure that all the world ought to flock to see it and lose their troubles in its light, so radiant in itself that, where it shone, it would reveal all things.

Time went on, and the promise worked in the minds of men, and all the more as the land got into trouble. And the royal folk, and the idle people who cared for splendour, and the priests who wanted power, and the poor who lived only for bread and games, began to picture, being dissatisfied with their life, of what sort the diamond would be, and of what appearance its bringer. "No doubt," they said, "he will be a great prince, with a regal and glorious court, and a fine army at his heels! And as to the stone, let us image it in many ways"; so they made huge crystals, a host of them, and hung them up in the temples, with blazing lamps, and cried, "These are as nothing to the splendour, size, and fire of the diamond that is to come."

At last, along the streets one day, a poor man (in clean white garments such as the common people wore) passed through the town, and, coming to the market-place, stood still, and declared that he was the carrier of the diamond. "Here it is," he said, and drew from his bosom a stone, small in comparison with the great crystals, but which, to a few who looked into it, scintillated with a light so soft and yet so clear that joy seemed to pass out of it into the hearts of the lookers, and contentment into their lives, and knowledge of the hidden world into their soul.

But the main part were furious with the poor man, and said his stone was a piece of rubbish; and when he still maintained that he was the sage prophesied of old, and his stone the true diamond, they slew him in their anger, and flung the diamond into the streets, to be picked up and cherished by a few, and so returned to worship in the great temples where the crystals hung, and to finally believe that the crystals, each of them, were the diamond. Then, while the diamond itself did its quiet work among those who loved it, how the others fought and squabbled, each for his own crystal, and against the others, no tongue can tell. They deafened the kingdom with their senseless noise.

The story serves in part to illustrate what happened when Jesus brought to Jerusalem the true idea of the Kingdom of God. He was no prince; his kingdom was not splendid; the truth he taught was supported by no armies and no cunning. It was humble and spiritual; only those who loved could see it, for it was Love itself.

The thing the Jews had long desired came to them; the dream of prophets,

* A sermon preached in the Newhall-hill Church, Birmingham, at the annual meeting of the Midland Christian Union, March 17.

the hope of the human heart, the expectation of a thousand years, and when it came they were unable to see it; nay, they hated it! That was very pitiful.

But the matter is not only historical: it is a common story in common human life.

We start with some aspiration which, when we are young, is noble; with some high conception of our true work and of its aim. We live by it; we long for its fulfilment; and then when its true fulfilment comes, we, too, are unable to see it: nay, we hate that fulfilment, because it is not what we have painted it; not what we, as we lived, have made it to be. That is one of the most pitiful things in life.

Why did this happen to the Jews? Why does it happen to us? We find the reason in the story of the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven, as it came with Christ to the Jews. Worldliness, love of the things which change and pass and die, had crept into that idea, and creeps into our aims. The spiritual is lured into fornication with the material. We mix up our youthful aspirations, as the Nationalist Jews did the Kingdom of God, with self-seeking, with a struggle for wealth, with the desire for popular fame and social position, till the ideas we had have changed their nature—have lost their imaginative quality; and when the pure idea itself comes—that which holds in it the perfect archetype of all we once rudely conceived and loved—and brings with it surrender of self, a trumpet call to leave the things which are dying for those that are living; having in its train no splendour of the world, no money, and no social repute, but rather temperance and quiet, and the Cross; endurance of hardness, battle, and work in stillness; all the trappings gone with which our self-desire clothed it, and says to us, "Here I am, the pearl of great price. Sell all thou hast and buy me," we are angry, despise, hate, and reject it! Driven by the Nemesis of our worldliness, we not only attack the true aim of our life, we also defend the false. Then there is failure, and men, when we are dead, look back and say, "He began well, but the end was wretched. He did no good to mankind. Even more, he did it evil. He opposed, he injured those who brought the true ideas. All he ought to have loved he persecuted. The image his youth aspired to he trampled on in age. 'Tis pitiful."

Another way the world blinds us is by its wearing, grinding power. It passes over us like a great glacier over a smiling valley, and smoothes us down into one unideal conventionality. It is the great danger of professional and business work; of physicians, lawyers, ministers, and merchants; and a terrible danger for ministers of God to men. We lose care for ideas, for aspirations, for battling for the good and happiness of others. All things are done with decency and respectability, in the way the world expects. Nothing new is struck out, such as love and imagination would be sure to do. We have given up our youthful ideas as foolish dreams. They weary us when they occur. "There's no good," we say, "no use in keeping up these things. I will just do my ordinary duty and no more." And so—and infinite is the pity of it—life becomes apathetic, mere machine-work, not hand-work. And when the true idea of our life comes before us begging for recognition we turn it from the door: "I am tired," we say, or, "you are not

respectable," or, "you look like an old friend, but I am afraid to own you." So we lose our true life, and mankind, judging us afterwards, says, "He was once young and bright and impelling; he became a machine, of no good to us." This is the most common form of the worldliness which is the first reason why we cannot see the true kingdom when it comes.

Another reason is narrowness of view, made and supported by personal prejudice. There is a type of this also in the history of Christ. The youth of John the Baptist was illuminated by the idea of the Kingdom of God. There was no worldliness, no self-seeking in his conception of it; yet when it came, he also did not see it. In a few years all that glowing expectation was sunk in disappointment. He died even more piteously than Savonarola.

Why was this? The answer is in the narrowness of the idea. The Baptist's conception of the kingdom began and ended in the circumference of the Jewish nation. It faded in his hands, because the time had come for a universal kingdom, and he could not comprehend that extension of it. His prejudices were too strong for him.

This is often the explanation of our failures. We limit our ideas, our aspirations for moral, social, or political reform to a class, a sect, a church or set of churches, to a political party, to our own society. We even limit our aims sometimes to our own estate or our own family. What, then, can God do with our ideas and aims but make them fail in the form in which we hold them?

Or we insist on their being carried out in the special shape which our prejudices have given them—in an individual or a class form, when humanity wants the idea, without any special form being given to it. Then, if we persist, what can God do with our passionate hopes but disappoint them? Were we to succeed, the world, tied down to an individual and prejudiced image of the universal idea, would suffer from a kind of slavery. All freedom of shaping the idea would be taken from it. Only those who shared our prejudices, which we call, vainly, principles, could use it, and the use would be misuse. That must not be: therefore our whole work fails. God blocks it, and justly.

Yet there is a certain success. I have supposed that these prejudiced persons have not been self-seeking, and have been righteous in their endeavour. They have been like John the Baptist. Then the character they have put into their work tells for good upon the world (as John's has done), even though their life and work have been a failure. And the pity the world feels for their failure increases often the influence of their character.

Moreover, there is a personal blessedness which we must not overlook. These men, in the midst of earthly failure, hear, as the Baptist heard, God's voice in their hearts. Their righteousness brings them into union with the Father. They die, not having realised their aim, not having seen the true thing, unable indeed to see it, but they are not alone when they die. The Father, and His peace, are with them. Sad is their life, but, as in some great picture from which we turn away sorrowfully because the artist has not been able to represent his thought fully, we see that the spirit of the effort he has made re-

mains an influence among men, and we know that the artist was not all unhappy. He had done what he could for beauty, and beauty did not desert him in the end. So the comfort of the Father does not desert these men who have failed. "Well done, faithful servant," he whispers in their dying ear.

Once more. The Disciples also failed to realise their hopes. Up to the hour of Christ's death the true kingdom was with them, and they did not see it. They lost all the conceptions they had of it as much as John. But afterwards they did see it; rejected all the world for its sake, lost their self and all the life of self in it, and spread it far beyond the Jewish world, universally, over the Gentiles.

So, then, there may be illusions lost, hopes disappointed, forms of ideas unfulfilled, failure of aspirations, and yet men recover—find nobler forms of thought, change all the forms of their views, gain faiths instead of hopes, and reality instead of illusions! The Disciples, though they had clung to the inadequate, found out the adequate. Having lived in a false show, they left it for a city which had foundations.

What saved them? For it is that which will save us when all our old ideas, in the form we have given them, are broken up; when we feel that all our hopes are failure. Love saved them. It is that, in this dreadful crisis, which will enable us to begin with eagerness a new life, and open our hearts to the morning of a new endeavour. It was love that saved them; in their case love of Jesus, in whose life they found, when prejudice was gone, the very fountain of passionate Being. This love carried them away from the old, and poured into them a new inspiration.

It is the same kind of thing—some intense love for what is loving, for the Christ in human nature—which saves us when all our life seems to have failed, and all our hopes are gone. When, through every failure and sorrow we keep the power of loving well and deeply in good health, so that when we see in some person what is pure and true, we can rejoice and give ourselves to it; when we can, borne by the natural expansion of love, go beyond a personal love, and rejoice and give ourselves to the love of a great and noble cause, not losing the personal love, but taking it with us into the more universal affection; when, at any moment, we can thus give ourselves away in love, we can always forget the failure of the old, and enter into the life of the new endeavour, of the new conception. No failure then quenches energy, no sorrow conquers the possibility of joy, no destroyed illusion injures our power to find a new motive for life. And henceforth, when love has its perfect way, we are certain not to fall into the error of the Pharisees or of John—the error of selfish materialism, or the error of limiting prejudice, or the error of mechanical life. These things cannot breathe in the air of love. Of its very nature, that is spiritual and universal. Yes, this is what we all want, and especially we ministers of the Gospel, love of the great ideas and causes which God has made to grow in the heart of man, which, appearing in the history of humanity, are the living wheels, full of eyes within, by whose movement the chariot of the Progress of Man advances. It is not mere intellectual assent

to these we need, but emotional love of them, so that we cannot live without them. Not less of intellect we want, but more of passion. And, for my part, I think we want these ideas, such as the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, self-sacrifice the true life, the immortality of the personal spirit in God's Fatherhood, the freedom of the soul, and many others, embodied in a man, in his life and death; one of us, whom we may honour and love as our leader. We want Jesus Christ, as St. Paul wanted him. In him the ideas, the causes are held in a person worthy of them, and in fighting under his banner we fight for them; we fight for God the Father's character in the human race. If you cannot, as yet, give Jesus Christ that love, you can love the ideas, the cause he loved. At any rate, love something; love some truth as you love your sweetheart, ay, with a deeper love. When there is noble love there never will be final failure. Love of a truth of God in man—there, and there only, illusion is not. Every effort is certain of its end in God and man.

These, then, are the things we learn about the problem of failure, from the history of the idea of the Kingdom of God. To keep our noble hopes and aims clear of the elements of the world; clear of self-seeking; clear of prejudice; clear of the conventional: in the universal; to root our life in love, and let nothing injure in us the power of loving.

But when God has enabled us to do that, and from our point of vantage we look back on all the failures, illusions, disappointments, and battles through which we have passed to our conquest—do we learn nothing from the retrospect?

Many things, but two things especially. First, that truth only grows clear in this world through the slow working-out of its inadequate or false forms, and the proof, through the failure of these forms, of their unfitness or their falsehood. The truth itself can only be known when all its false forms are exhausted. It seems a clumsy arrangement, but so it is, and we must make the best of it. When we complain of it, and are angry, we get hopelessly wrong in life. When we accept it, and trust His goodness who has made it so, our character betters, our life blesses others, and we die with the sense of victory.

But whatever we think about it, the thing itself is true, and it is well to know it. We see it working on a large scale in the history of the world. The great conceptions, the great truths, which the East, Israel, Greece, Rome, France, England, Germany, Italy, have wrought out for the world have each gone (like the idea of the Kingdom of God among the Jews) through a number of untrue or inadequate representations of them, each of which has been battled over, until the false in it was eliminated and the true remained.

We may look round the world now and see the same thing going on. The ideas, the truths at the root of the Revolution which, accumulating for some centuries under the surface of society, appeared a hundred years ago in France, for a time clearly, and then slipped into false and terrible forms, have ever since then been passing through a series of inadequate forms, in which the untrue is being slowly exhausted, towards their fit and perfect form. Nearly every great conception in

the realm of science is doing the same. And when we look into our own personal lives we are conscious of the same law at work. We have given form after form to our main thoughts, to our aspiration after an ideal character. We have worked through these forms, proved the inadequacy and wrongness of the greater part of their elements, and come out on the other side of them. We call these struggles failures.

They are in reality steps towards the true ideal—towards the actual truth. A few elements among many wrong ones we have recognised as true. We have kept these. That is not failure, but a partial success. The other elements we have rejected; proved them to be false. They are exhausted for us; we shall be never troubled by them again. So far as they are concerned our way to the perfect is free. That is their failure, not ours, and their failure is our success. Therefore take courage and have faith. Look to the end.

In this way the working of the law brings about the second thing we learn. That slowly, in nations and in men, in the whole of the human race, a character is being formed. Led on by illusions, quickened by ideas, hurried forward by passionate emotions, checked and forced to retreat by equally passionate though opposite emotions, depressed by failures till the cause of failures is found and the strength which is evolved in the search for their cause is secured, taught alike by being at the top of success and at the bottom of ruin, but always rising again out of the pit as long as there is any righteousness or love in us—nations and men and women are moulded by God, and mould themselves, into distinct and vigorous personality; that is, they win a will with a clear aim, a veteran character which distinguishes them, each from each, nation from nation, individual from individual, until at last, in the nation and in the person, and in humanity, hereafter, if not here, a vivid, clear, powerful, individual force, having its own work to do, emerges into the universe, knows its work, and does it with joy.

Then, when one of us, or a nation, or in the end the whole body of humanity realises at last living Being in its fullness, and is thrilled with the rapture of easy and powerful creation, what shall we, or the nation, or humanity at large, care for the troubles, failures, or battles that have preceded the attainment? Every memory of them will be drowned in the glory of having arrived at perfect Being, or, if we remember them, we shall only remember not their pain but the stern pleasure we had in their conquest. By their means, or rather through their straight and rocky gates, we have gained actual, clear, and noble character, vivid Being in love, the immortal power of making, as we move, what is beautiful and good—creative power and its delightfulness. This is worth every trouble that has led to it, every failure that exhausted one of its obstacles. This is the great, the foremost thing.

Have faith in that. We, ministers and people, have reasons enough for despondency. Life has its dark depressions, work its own despairs, efforts seem useless, and the gloom within is sometimes deeper than the gloom without. Then recall who you are—sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, of the Eternal Good-

ness and the Eternal Love who has sworn by Himself that He will see us through our battles into union with His love. And, seeing the Invisible, you will conquer the visible. Believe in the very teeth of unbelief. That is the patience of the saints. These are the two great things we learn. To what, now, do they point?

They point to a mighty Will outside humanity, and yet within it, who has a purpose to fulfil, and that purpose the perfection of man in union with Himself. They point to God as Father and Educator of the Race, and they point to our Immortality in Him.

On the theory that there is no such will and power without us, no purpose whatever in this long history, how is the history of this huge, slow-marching Evolution of Humanity to be explained? This slow development of truth through failure—that, what explanation is there in the doctrine that the whole race becomes in the end corrupted dust, and all the truth wrought out dies in the silence and the inactivity of a dead universe? Is the doctrine that all the movement we see is at its beginning chance, and has no clear end of noble life in view—any rational explanation of a course of things which is certainly accompanied by growth, and which seems to have purpose stamped upon it? And is it any explanation of the slow clearing of truth that there should be no absolute truth at all beyond our errors—no Will towards truth, who is eternal and powerful enough to take us up into Himself and make us satisfied with truth for ever?

And that slow formation of character, of a powerful, distinct personality in men and nations, is it really explained by the doctrine that the character and the personality came together by a purposeless series of antecedents, undirected by any will, any intelligence, any moral aim, and result in Nothingness? Or, that they exist at the most for the purpose of enabling future nations and individuals to have characters and personalities of a higher quality, which, however higher, shall perish in their turn, as all at the last shall do? Is there anyone here conscious of a distinct being, who is satisfied with such a statement of the cause and result of his being? Must they not look forward to further development?

There is development. That we know. Does it abruptly cease for no reason whatever? I do not say that the looking forward, and the hopes, are any proof that the development will be; but I say that we do gain distinct being and its force, and with it its hopes, and that this gain and the conceptions and actions which arise from it are facts which need explanation; and that the theory which says that all these gains and their results are only for the purpose that others may gain more of them and in a higher fashion, and then that all, with all the gains, are to go out, like a burnt candle, and (to make it more futile) when they have reached their highest point of development—is no explanation of the facts at all, and would (if the matters which are considered were physical) be rejected by a scientific philosopher as a wholly inadequate theory.

As to the half-formed characters either of nations or men, those conscious that they are only half-formed, who feel the bitterness of this, do they, when they care most for the ideal aims, for the perfection which they have not realised—do they

believe that the theory which predicts their annihilation explains the facts of their case?

Why, it wholly passes them by. It coolly, cynically abandons them. They are only the steps on which the higher characters advance, and they are kicked away. All these poor souls, fully half if not more of the human race, are absolutely lost to make a grain of gain for the selected folk. This is the hell of these theorists, and it is even worse than the hell of the orthodox, if we remove the element of torture. Moreover, all the selected themselves perish in the end, dying like fools, if they have lived like wise men. The whole race, even when perfected, squeaks out of the universe into a puff of vapour. If ever there was a theory which was stamped with want of intellect, this is that theory.

No; half things naturally suggest to the reason wholes which are to be. Things in us which are unfinished mean to the reason, judging from experience, finish to come. Beginnings of good things mean (for we know by experience that good grows) endings in higher good. The consciousness of having begun, and of having been development up to a certain point in moral, spiritual, and imaginative force, carries with it a just hope, and finally a conviction of further development; and that conviction can only be fulfilled if Immortality and God's love be true.

And now, what these persons feel all mankind feels as a whole. There ascends from all the ages to the Heavens, a vast, incessant, uttered, and unuttered cry for the whole—humanity groaning and travailing for fullness of life, to find itself equal to its own conception of itself; nay, to have the glory and the finish which it can only dream. This, which is historical fact, is not explained by the theories which leave mankind without a God, and man without immortal continuance. They shut their eyes to it because it contradicts them.

But we say that it means a purpose in the universe, and the purpose means a will beyond ourselves, which Will (if it be good) will determine the satisfaction of man's noble desires for completion and perfection.

Man will know then the advances he made by failures, the successes hidden in his mistakes, the force and joyfulness which crown his faithful struggle. And that theory gives, at least, an adequate reason for the facts that we observe in history and in ourselves. It explains the unsatisfaction of humanity.

And finally, as to truth, the same inference holds good. Nothing explains man's passion for it but its absolute existence beyond us in One who is the very truth, and whose will is that it should be possessed, at last, by man in all its fullness. And if there is such a truth, and we are from Him, and He is good, then it is impossible that He should answer the long, collective, and individual effort of the whole human race after truth by a grim mockery, and say, "Go, you have struggled long, wept and suffered long, desired with inextinguishable passion the very truth. Take now your reward; pass into Nothingness; you shall never have truth." If He could do that, God would be worse than the worst of us. But He is not that. He is immortal love and justice. He will love us and do us justice. He is full

of sorrow for us. Like as a Father pitieth his own children even so God pities our long trouble, and gives us, when we are worthy of it and able to use it, the whole truth at last. We grasp it with unspeakable joy; it satisfies us to the core of our Being, and the joy of it is itself Immortal Life, and the Life is ever-acting Love. Now we know in part, but then we shall know as we are known.

NORTH AND EAST LANCASHIRE UNITARIAN MISSION.

THE annual meeting of the North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission was held at Accrington on Wednesday, March 16. The proceedings began with Divine Service in Oxford-street Chapel at 2.45, the devotional part of the service conducted by the Rev. J. Ruddle, the sermon by the Rev. H. Gow, B.A., of Leicester. At the close of the service a business meeting was held, Mr. E. Mills, president of the Mission, presiding, in which the report and statement of accounts were adopted.

The Committee in their report acknowledged the good work done at the various Mission stations, that at Leigh being the only exception, where a year of anxiety had been spent. The new buildings had, however, been opened, and when a minister was appointed there was good hope of a more prosperous future. The services of Mr. and Mrs. Crompton, of Rivington, who carry on a Postal Mission, were also gratefully acknowledged. The Treasurer's statement showed a balance in hand. On the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by the Rev. J. C. ODGERS, thanks were given to Mr. Gow for the able sermon in the afternoon, and to Mr. Ruddle for leading the devotional service. On the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by Mr. J. S. MACKIE, officers were chosen for the coming year as follows:—President, Mr. H. Jackson, Padiham; treasurer, Mr. T. Harwood, Bolton; chairman of committee, Mr. T. H. Hope, Atherton; vice-chairman of committee, Rev. J. J. Wright, Atherton; secretaries, Rev. R. Travers Herford, B.A., Stand, and the Rev. Edward Parry, B.A., Todmorden.

A resolution was passed expressing the sense of loss sustained in the death of the Rev. W. A. Clarke, of Newchurch, and also through the resignation of the Rev. E. T. Russell, of Padiham. In seconding this resolution, the Rev. J. J. Wright took the opportunity to mention, with expressions of deep affection and regret, the more recent loss caused by the untimely death of Mr. N. Woodward, of Chowbent, whose faithful friendly services on behalf of the Mission continued almost to the day of his death. The congregation silently rose to their feet to support the resolution. Thanks were then passed to the Accrington friends for their hospitable reception.

A tea meeting followed in the school-room. A good number of friends had attended from Padiham, Burnley, Newchurch, Rawtenstall and other congregations of the district, ministers, and delegates from most of the churches connected with the Mission were present. A very healthy, happy spirit was manifested both during the tea and at the public meeting in the chapel, which began promptly at half-past six.

The meeting opened with a hymn announced by the Rev. J. Ruddle, who

then said he was very happy indeed at being able to call upon one of their members, Mr. E. Mills, as the President of the Mission, to take the conduct of the meeting.

Mr. E. MILLS in taking the chair, after remarking that he was no speaker, and that his voice too was out of condition for speaking, gave a brief and most interesting account of the early days of the Unitarian movement in Accrington, telling how a few friends got hold of Unitarian books, particularly some of the writings of Theodore Parker, how they took counsel together to spread the light which seemed helpful to themselves; how they obtained the assistance of the Rev. John Wright, then of Bury; how a series of lectures was arranged for, which were delivered by the Revs. John Wright, George Hoare, Dr. Beard, and Adam Rushton; how about a hundred people came to the first lecture, more to the second, and a crowd of some 800 or 900 to hear Dr. Beard, who after his lecture was so heckled and bestormed as to get not a little excited, till he advised a prominent young minister to go home and pray for wisdom; how regular meetings were at length established which were held in the police-station (the criminals being downstairs and the Unitarians above), till it became a proverbial thing to threaten a man if he began to be drunken or disorderly that he should be hauled up to the Unitarian Chapel; how from there the congregation migrated to the Peel Institute; finally, how the present chapel was built. "Never," said the President in conclusion, "never, I think, has our ship been in better order or better manned than it is at the present time." The Chairman's address gave the liveliest satisfaction, being referred to in words of praise by each subsequent speaker.

A solo was then sung by one of the members of the choir,

After which the Rev. C. J. Street, of Bolton, gave an address, in which he called attention to a movement in the Presbyterian Church of England, initiated by the Manchester Presbytery. Some of its members were stirred to wrath by the fact that the recent bazaar in Manchester was held under the auspices of an "Association of Presbyterian and Unitarian Churches," and a Committee was appointed by the Presbytery to look into the question and ascertain what steps were desirable to prevent Unitarians from using the Presbyterian name. That Committee had now reported, advising that the subject should be further prosecuted, "for the sake of their own people and others in sister Evangelical Churches, who did not understand the historical bearings of the question," and referred it to the Supreme Court of the Church to take such action as it thought best. Mr. Street said that the continuity of families and of ownership of property from Presbyterian to Unitarian times was not in dispute, and the historical spiritual descent of many of our congregations could scarcely be doubted; but our rights to use the name and hold the property were. As for the name, it was true that some of our associations, churches, and ministers still retained it from a regard for its historical significance and its savour of freedom, and only under some such name could a minority be held in our fellowship. Personally, he was content to pay his debt of gratitude to the past, and then

adapt himself to the new conditions of the present. The name "Presbyterian" was invented to signify a certain form of Church government, which, being un congenial to English life, broke down in this country after the Revolution. But while there was in England an actual Presbyterian organisation, even though of comparatively recent importation from Scotland, he felt that its advocates were entitled to the name, and, so far as he was concerned, they were welcome to it. In Ireland Unitarianism was largely Presbyterian in the literal sense, and in England some would desire it to be so. To him, Presbyterianism as an ecclesiastical institution was an unlovely thing, and hence he did not use the name. He preferred Congregationalism, with all its faults. But so far as historical right was concerned, he did not doubt that the name belonged to us if we cared to take it. Names changed their significance and must be judged by their latest meaning. "English Presbyterian" had come to express an attitude towards religion which was peculiar to their own churches. This led him to consider the question of property. Undoubtedly the bulk of the Presbyterians in the seventeenth century were Calvinistic, making the Thirty-Nine Articles or the Shorter Catechism into their standard. But a growing distaste for ecclesiastical authority and interference asserted itself. The Presbyterians came to stand for open Communion, as distinguished from the Independents, whose dividing line between church and congregation was not accepted by the Presbyterians. Presbyterianism stood rather for freedom of the individual conscience under the protection of the State, independency for ecclesiastical freedom from the State and theological bondage for the individual. Deeds were deliberately executed with an open trust by the Presbyterian founders of the early chapels. Their deed at Bank-street Chapel, Bolton, e.g., provided for a meeting place of Protestant Dissenters, and the ministerial qualification was to be that allowed by the Toleration Act or by "some other Act of Parliament or law that shall hereafter be made and constituted in favour and allowance of such Dissenting Protestants." If these early deeds had been tied by a theological trust it would have betrayed a want of faith in the power of truth to vindicate itself. A close trust on orthodox lines they would not wish to claim, though there was much to be said against the tyranny of the dead hand, and half a century or so of possession might be allowed to constitute a very fair title even in such cases. But the deeds of our chapels were open. Those who framed them, if they did not anticipate changes of theological opinion, yet made them possible and lawful. By the Wolverhampton and Lady Hewley cases it was decided that such a term as "worship" occurring in a deed excluded any worship that was illegal when the deed was drawn. As the Toleration Act excluded Unitarianism from its privileges this decision would have deprived Unitarians of all the property which they had inherited from their Presbyterian forefathers. But an appeal was made to Parliament, and in 1844 the Dissenters' Chapels Act was passed—the charter of our liberty. By this Act twenty-five years' usage constituted adequate title where the trust was free. The profession of Unit-

arianism had been legalised in 1813, though the system had been openly proclaimed and advocated long before then. One clause in the Dissenters' Chapels Acts ran thus:—"All deeds or documents relating to such charitable foundations shall be construed as if the said [relief] Acts had been in force respectively at the respective times of founding or using such meeting houses, schools, or other charitable foundations as aforesaid," which meant that the Toleration Act exception of Unitarianism was no longer to be regarded in the interpretation of any trust deed. Thus we were justified in holding our property both by legal and by moral right. The Presbyterians who in Scotland held cathedrals and endowments of Catholic foundation had little right to raise this plea against Unitarians. No wonder they were afraid of Unitarianism. The history of Presbyterianism in England was a standing object-lesson to them in this respect. The secession of the ancient Presbytery of Antrim, and later of the congregations that formed the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, was another lesson from Ireland. Robertson Smith, Marcus Dods, and A. B. Bruce had troubled the Free Church of Scotland with their heresies, hardly to be distinguished from Unitarianism, and quite recently the Established Church in the same country, riddled as it was with heresy, had used its force to expel the Rev. Alexander Robinson for preaching similar doctrine. Now Dr. Watson, Ian Maclaren himself, was threatened with a trial for heresy at an assembly meeting in his own church. Presbyterianism could not free itself of this dreaded taint, try how it will. The fact was, the minds of men refuse to be bound by the creeds of others: so would it ever be. But a little persecution would do us all the good in the world, help to shake up some of the dry bones, and teach our young people to value and stand up for their own faith. As for their Presbyterian opponents, he wished more power to their arms and courage to their hearts. Let them try another Lady Hewley case, and we would meet them on their own ground, and God would take care of His truth.

Mr. J. ROWCROFT, of Hyde, representing the East Cheshire Mission, gave an interesting account of the work at Boston Mills schools, and the establishment of a congregation at Ashton. He urged the need of boldness and zeal, and held that it had been proved that it only strengthens existing congregations, and in no wise imperils them when another congregation is formed only a mile or two distant.

The Rev. CHARLES ROPER conveyed sympathetic greetings from the Manchester District Association. He referred to the distinctly Unitarian name of the Mission, and asked whether it meant any sort of theological testing of the churches seeking and receiving its aid. As a matter of fact, the Mission never for a moment dreamt of controlling the thought of the churches by means of its money. They who knew what freedom was in connection with a definitely Unitarian Mission, could realise the groundless alarm raised in some quarters as to the doctrinal control of the churches by the B. and F. Association. Such a thing would not happen. The name had undergone an evolution in meaning like most other names; and the preponderating number of Unitarians claim for them-

selves and extend to others absolute freedom in matters of theological opinion. Referring to the recent articles in the *Seed sower* concerning the so-called "Two Opposing Tendencies," he denied that they were opposing, and said that in reality our churches were less doctrinal and more religious to-day than ever before. We are, too, less a sect than were the English Presbyterians. We exclude no one from our church membership, nor ask them a single question concerning their beliefs. The avowed diminution of religious earnestness is a phantom. What is it that goads us on to new and higher thought to-day? that initiates and supports our Forward Movement? that provides so much money for any really good cause which is eloquently advocated? It is, again, a most absurd error to suppose that Unitarian ministers preach nothing but doctrinal discourses. That a man's theological opinions colour his religious teaching goes without the saying, and who would expect it otherwise? But it is ignorance of the real state of affairs which concludes that the minister of a nominally Unitarian Church is always pulling orthodoxy to pieces, and elaborating Unitarian doctrine dogmatically. When we bear in mind the dreadfully superstitious and uncharitable opinions held even yet by our orthodox neighbours, we are bound to be zealous about preaching a purer theology, for that means clearer and more lovable ideas about God, and more dignifying theories of human destiny. As to our name. Doubtless if some one could invent a better one, in all respects, we should as readily accept it as we accept new truth.

A rather hurried, though able and interesting, reply to Mr. Roper's speech was made by the Rev. H. Gow, and then the evening hymn and Benediction brought an excellent and profitable meeting to a close.

Among those present at the service or other meetings were the Revs. R. T. Herford, E. Parry, J. C. Odgers, J. J. Wright, T. Leyland, P. Holt, S. Thompson, E. Turland, Geo. Ryde, E. Allen, C. J. Street, C. Roper, A. C. Smith, R. C. Moore, and leading members of most of the congregations connected with the Mission.

ON POSTAL MISSION SERVICE.

SIR,—The following extracts from letters received from some of our correspondents in distant countries may interest the readers of *THE INQUIRER*. They show how much the literature sent out by the Postal Mission is appreciated, and of what great value it is in helping to keep alive the religious enthusiasm of those who have few opportunities of receiving help and encouragement in the religious life.

FLORENCE HILL,

Hon. Sec. Central Postal Mission,
13, Christ Church-road, Hampstead, N.W.

The following is from a correspondent who is with his regiment in the Soudan:—

"Having been on active service for a month or so, I trust you will excuse me for not writing you before. We are at present at a point about thirty or forty miles south of Abu Hamed.

"We move another twenty miles towards Berber in a day or two. No resistance has been met with so far, but

it is expected that the Khalifa may make a night attack soon.

"Owing to the very limited allowance of personal baggage allowed, I was unable to bring the "Perfect Life" and other very instructive books that you were so kind as to forward to me, and I do not know whether I am going too far in asking you to favour me with a further supply of reading matter. I receive *THE INQUIRER* regularly. Will you kindly thank the lady who forwards it, for I can tell you that I anxiously await its arrival by mail."

Another letter received from an Englishman in India says:—

"Many thanks for the books you sent me, and you may rest assured that good use will be made of them. These books will be of great service to us. I offer you my hearty thanks for your promise of sending me a copy of *THE INQUIRER* regularly. It will not be read by me alone, but half-a-dozen Indian students. I am a humble speaker and deliver my addresses in the Brahma Somaj occasionally. I have a particular liking for such work and I try my best to spread Theistic faith after doing my work. May the Almighty God give you success and join us all in one brotherhood."

From a correspondent at Bombay:—

"The pamphlets kindly sent have afforded me an intellectual pabulum for which I am really grateful. Their perusal has indelibly impressed upon my mind the fact that the salvation of the world consists only in the attainment and practice of virtue. . . . The venerable Dr. James Martineau and the Rev. S. A. Brooke are not unknown in this distant land of ours. We know full well what a highly conspicuous rôle they have played, and still play, in the literary and religious history of modern England. It may be of interest to know that 'Types of Ethical Theory' constitutes an examination paper by itself in the course of Moral Philosophy prescribed by the University of Bombay for the B.A. students. . . . The plague is working much havoc here, and we are literally in the midst of death. In this hour of dire distress and calamity it is a great consolation to know that there is a God above us, who cares for us and loves us."

An English correspondent writes:—

"I was very much pleased to read the excellent article on your Postal Mission in the first number of *THE INQUIRER* of this year. From personal experience I can fully endorse every word of it, as I have found the books I have had from it exceedingly helpful, and I have derived from them very much pleasure, instruction, benefit, and consolation, for which I shall always feel most grateful. I cordially hope it may long continue to prosper, as I am sure it must be to many a great boon, and especially to those who, through slender means, are unable to purchase the books for themselves. I shall be glad to become a subscriber to *THE INQUIRER* as soon as able. The first number for last January is very interesting."

No man can keep his religion in a Church, in a doctrinal statement, a profession, a Sunday, or a sacrament. His religion is the health of his being. To be real and vital it must be in himself; it must be the spirit or principle which inspires and orders his life; else he has no religion.—C. G. Ames.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

[Notices and Reports for this Department should be as brief as possible, and be sent in by Thursday Morning.]

Ashton-under-Lyne.—The first anniversary of the Unitarian congregation was celebrated last Sunday, March 21, when special services were held in the Mechanics' Institute. The afternoon service, conducted by the minister, the Rev. W. C. Hall, was attended by nearly 200 persons. In the evening the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson preached to a congregation which filled the large room of the institute. Collections at the services realised £14 10s. The Ashton congregation has at present eighty-four enrolled members. The membership roll was begun less than six months ago, and considerable additions are expected during next quarter. There is a Sunday-school of forty-five children, an adult class of thirty members, a ladies' sewing society of twenty-six members, and a girls' dressmaking class of ten members. These figures and the fact that the attendance at the Sunday services is generally 130, show that the congregation has more than doubled its strength during the last seven months. It now requires buildings of its own, and during the year an effort will be begun in this direction.

Belfast: Mountpottinger.—The annual children's soiree and distribution of prizes took place in the schoolroom on Monday, the 21st inst., under the presidency of Mr. Henry Napier, superintendent of the school. A very successful series of popular entertainments, which have been held during the winter months, have just ended. Spelling-bees were very popular. They were conducted by the Revs. J. A. Kelly, of Dunmurry, and W. J. Davies and Mr. Hannah. All the members of our church are now straining every nerve to make the approaching bazaar, which will be held on April 21, 22, and 23, a grand success. Gifts in money or kind will be thankfully received by Dr. Munn, hon. treasurer, or the Rev. W. J. Davies, hon. secretary. The proceeds will be in aid of the Church Extension Fund.

Blackley.—At a meeting of the congregation held on March 13 the following resolution was unanimously passed:—"That the congregation accept with great regret the resignation of the Rev. George Street as minister, and would hereby express to him their deep sense of gratitude for his ministrations during the four and a-half years of his sojourn amongst them."

Braintree.—The series of special Sunday evening lectures which have been given in the Free Christian Church on "The Spirit of Unitarianism" were brought to a successful termination on Sunday last, when the Rev. E. M. Daplyn gave an address upon "Our Religion: What is it?" The services have been well attended throughout, the building being well filled each evening, and the congregation numbering many representatives of the various denominations in the district. It is hoped in a few months' time to make evening services permanent.

Brixton.—On March 20 Sunday-school anniversary services were held, when special sermons were preached by the Rev. James Harwood, B.A., and collections for the funds taken. This was the first occasion on which the children and their parents were directly invited, which invitation was accepted in goodly numbers—morning, 8 teachers and 66 children; evening, 8 teachers and 76 children, with many parents also. There was a good attendance also of the congregation, and the sum of £15 11s. was collected. There has been a marked increase in the school this winter, so that the superintendent, Mr. Mussard, and all the teachers feel much encouraged in their work.

Exeter.—On Sunday evening the Rev. T. W. Chignell preached on the subject of University education in Ireland, dwelling upon the terrible waste of talent caused by the unwillingness of Roman Catholics to send their young men to a Protestant University, and urging that a university should be given them, which they would use. "Let us bury our old religious prejudices against the Catholics. Let us see to it that to all children the highest culture is open without impediment. There are many scruples that haunt sections of our people touching this subject. But do let us go to the centre of it, and waive secondary difficulties on the circumference. There is talent, genius crying to be educated, hungering for the higher stimulants of the intellect. Our Government in its generosity could easily supply their need. It could give them at once and without delay a college, not closed by tests, which is against the spirit of the time, but a college mainly consisting of Catholic Professors. What harm can this do to Protestants? Yet the good it would confer upon Irish children, upon the

Irish race, upon the civilisation of the world would be incalculable, illimitable."

Horsham.—On Thursday, March 10, a fairly good audience assembled in the Worthing-road Chapel to listen to a lecture on "George Eliot as a Religious Teacher," which was given by the Rev. J. Harwood, B.A., of Brixton. His hearers followed with close attention Mr. Harwood's analysis of her works, and entered into his discriminating admiration of her rare insight into human motives and feelings. This was the first Essex Hall lecture of the season, and is to be followed on April 4 and 5 by two, given by Mr. Nagarkar, on "The Brahmo Somaj" and "India."

Leigh.—A framed photograph of herself has been presented to Mrs. Boughey, wife of the Rev. J. Boughey, in recognition of her services to the church and school.

London: Clarence-road (Presentation).—An illuminated address subscribed for by the congregation of the Free Unitarian Church, and expressing "their grateful sense of his devoted, generous and long-continued services to the church as hon. secretary from 1871 to 1890, and as hon. treasurer from 1890 to 1897—with their high respect and fervent wishes for his restoration to health," was presented to Mr. Charles Hind, J.P., on March 18. Mr. Hind, to whom the presentation came as a pleasant surprise, expressed himself as highly gratified by this kind memento of his association with the work of the church.

Literary and Social Institute.—An interesting and instructive lecture on "Cremation: Its Religious Origin and Sanitary Necessity," was delivered by Mr. Armytage Bakewell on March 17.

Maidstone.—A very interesting lecture was given in the Earl-street Chapel, March 16, by Rev. S. Fletcher Williams on the subject "Sir Thomas More's 'Utopia' and Modern Socialism." The lecturer first presented a vivid sketch of More's personality, his wit, eloquence, humanity and courage, described the scenes of appalling poverty which inspired the composition of the "Utopia," and explained at length the Utopian arrangements for the cure of social syncope. Many of the reforms advocated by More have been realised, and the lecturer did not doubt that many more would yet be accomplished. In an eloquent peroration Mr. Williams portrayed the mighty power of the doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, when felt as living truths, to transform all the waste and desolate places of earth into habitations of righteousness and happiness. At the conclusion of the lecture the chairman, Mr. William Haynes, J.P., conveyed to Mr. Williams the hearty thanks of those present for his eloquent and instructive lecture.

Newcastle: Byker.—On Sunday last the anniversary of this place was celebrated, the sermon being preached by the Rev. J. H. Weatherall, B.A., of Darlington. A public meeting and tea was arranged for the Monday, and interesting speeches were delivered by Revs. J. H. Weatherall and Arthur Harvie, Messrs. Slater, Coysh, Errington, and Carter. It is felt that very little progress is possible in connection with this effort until a removal into the district of Heaton is effected. A building fund has been started amongst the members, and one of the interesting features of the anniversary meeting was the announcement of the addition of the sum of £4 10s., proceeds from a recent conversation.

Newton Abbot.—On Thursday week the Rev. Joseph Wain, of Bristol, lectured in the Public Rooms, on "Eternal Punishment." The object of punishment, he said, was entirely defeated if it was eternal. This doctrine should be put aside as unworthy of rational beings and unworthy of a loving God. He did not desire to lighten the sense of the evil of sin. He believed in eternal hope, eternal right. God would punish us, not because He hated, but because He loved us. Punishment was to make us truer and nobler. All thought of retaliation in punishment should be dropped. Let them rather speak of actions and their consequence, conduct and its issue, character and its laws, cause and effect, and recognise in these things a vital, organic connection that could not be broken or stopped. Then only would life be lived and ordered on right principles, fears and hopes be reasonable, and our conception of God and Providence be worthy of us as rational, thinking beings, and our religion become a thing of beauty and therefore a reality for evermore.

Newtonwards.—On Thursday week a service of song, entitled "Dick's Fairy," was given, under the management of the Rev. R. M. King. The selections were illustrated by limelight views, and the music rendered by the choir included several sacred solos.

Rotherham.—On Thursday, March 17, a lecture was given by the Rev. F. J. Parmer in the schoolroom of the Church of Our Father, the subject being "Dr. Johnson, a Hero of the Eighteenth Century."

Rev. W. Stephens, who presided, referred with pleasure to the liberal spirit shown by the lecturer in coming among them, not being of their household of faith. There was no compromise of principle, any more than there was when he himself went to lecture for the Congregational Church.

Swansea.—The Rev. T. Robinson has just concluded a course of six Sunday evening lectures on the great astronomers. Beginning with a review of the history of astronomy down to the time of Ptolemy, the succeeding lectures dealt with the lives and work of Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Galileo, and Sir Isaac Newton. Considerable interest was awakened by the course, and there were increased attendances.

Taunton.—To dispose of goods left on hand from the recent bazaar, a sale of work was held on the 10th inst., and it proved very successful. The Committee very cordially thank all friends who assisted in making the bazaar such a grand success. It exceeded all expectations, and a sum of £135 has been handed over to the day-school funds.

Walthamstow.—On Thursday week an interesting lecture, with lantern illustrations, on "America's Wonderland," was given by Mr. W. H. Shrubsole. The members of the congregation are encouraged by the success attending their efforts.

OUR CALENDAR.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27.

It is requested that notice of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday afternoon.

Bermondsey, Fort-road, Upper Grange-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. HAROLD RYLETT.

Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. HARWOOD, B.A.

Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-rd., West Croydon, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.

Deptford, Church-street, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. A. J. MARCHANT.

Essex Church, The Mall, Notting-hill-gate, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. FRANK K. FREESTON. Morning, "The Bible To-Day: IV.—Its Value to the Religious Life."

Forest-gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. HOLMSHAW.

Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. F. WILLIAMS.

Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Dr. BROOKE HERFORD. Collections for the Rosslyn-hill Day School.

Highgate Hill, Unitarian Christian Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. R. SPEARS.

Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. G. DAWES HICKS, M.A., Ph.D.

Kentish Town, Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, Rev. A. FARQUHARSON, 11 A.M., "The Light of Life," and 7 P.M., "What is the Word of God?"

Kilburn, Queex-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. E. STRONGE.

Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High-street 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. C. POPE.

Little Portland-street Chapel, near Oxford-circus 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. H. RAWLINGS, M.A. Evening, "Hints from Nansen's 'Farthest North.'"

Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. CADMAN.

Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. G. CARTER.

Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FARRINGTON.

Stamford-street, Blackfriars-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Mr. PROMOTHO LOIL SEN.

Stepney-Green, College Chapel, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Mr. L. TAVENER.

Stoke Newington, The Green, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. WOODING, B.A.

Wandsworth, Unitarian Christian Church, East-hill, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Mr. E. CAPLETON.

Wood Green, Unity Hall, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. Dr. MUMMERY.

Woolwich, Masonic Hall, Anglesey-road, Plumstead, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. W. STANLEY.

BEDFORD, Library (side room), 6.30 P.M., Rev. ROWLAND HILL.

BERMINGHAM, Church of the Messiah, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. L. P. JACKS.

BLACKPOOL, Banks-street, North Shore, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. WM. BINNS.

BLACKPOOL, Unitarian Lay Church, Masonic Hall, Waterloo-road, South Shore, 6.30 P.M.

BOOTLE, Free Church Hall, Stanley-road, 11 A.M. Mr. PRIDGON, and 6.30 P.M.
BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West-hill-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. C. C. COE.
BRIGHTON, Christ Church (Free Christian), New-road, North-st., 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M.
CANTERBURY, Blackfriars, 11 A.M.
DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. S. BURROWS.
EASTBOURNE, Natural History Museum, Lismore-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. S. H. MELLONE, M.A., D.Sc.
GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. A. FALLOWS, M.A.
HORSHAM, Free Christian Church, Worthing-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. J. MARTEN.
LEEDS, Mill Hill, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. C. HARGROVE, M.A.
LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. A. ARMSTRONG, B.A.
LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Texteth, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. J. JUPP.
LIVERPOOL, Renshaw-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. Dr. KLEIN. Evening, "The Fall of Man and the Nature of Sin: an Exposition of Unitarian Principles for Religious Inquirers."
MANCHESTER, Sale, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. JAMES FORREST, M.A.
MANCHESTER, Strangeways, 10.30 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.
OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30 A.M., Rev. Dr. DRUMMOND.
PORTSMOUTH, General Baptist Chapel, St. Thomas-street, 6.45 P.M., Mr. THOMAS BOND.
PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.45 P.M., Mr. G. COSENS PRIOR.
READING, Unitarian Free Church, London-road, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. A. VOYSEY, B.A.
SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS, B.A.
SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. COLLINS ODGERS, M.A.
TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. T. REED.
TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Mechanics' Institute, Dudley-road, 11 A.M., Mr. FRANK COLEBROOK, and 6.30 P.M., Mr. H. S. ROBERTON.
WEYMOUTH, Oddfellows' Hall, Market-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. C. BENNETT.
YORK, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. BIRKS, F.R.A.S.

CAPE TOWN, Free Protestant Unitarian Church, Hout-street, 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. BALMFORTH.

SOUTH-PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY,
SOUTH-PLACE, FINSBURY.—March 27th, at 11.15. Special Service. A Lecture by Dr. CONWAY, to be read by Mr. W. J. REYNOLDS.

BIRTHS.

LAYCOCK—On the 19th inst., at 357, Crookesmoor-road, Sheffield, the wife of Wm. Laycock, of a daughter.
MOULSDALE-WILLIAMS—On March 19th, at 10, Ouslow-road, Liverpool, the wife of J. O. Mouldsdales-Williams, of a daughter.

MARRIAGES.

PARTRIDGE—FRANKS—On the 17th inst., at the High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham, by the Rev. W. E. Addis, M.A., assisted by the Rev. E. D. Priestley Evans, of Kidderminster (brother-in-law of the bride), Arthur Durrad Partridge, of Leicester, to Kate Ellen Franks, of Park Drive, Nottingham.
WEISS—SPENCE WATSON—On the 21st inst., at the Friends' Meeting House, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Frederick Ernest Weiss, Professor of Botany at Owens College, Manchester, younger son of Mrs. Weiss, Hampstead, to Evelyn, third daughter of Dr. Spence Watson, of Gateshead-on-Tyne.

PULPIT SUPPLY.—The Rev. W. STODDART, B.A., is at LIBERTY to take SUNDAY DUTY.—Address, 30, West Bank, Stamford Hill, London, N.

EASTER AT ROME.—Very cheap inclusive Trips to Italy, starting April 1st and 6th, from any parts; also to Paris, Brussels, Switzerland, 7 days, £5, inclusive. May and June grand Tours to Germany and Ardennes.—Miss ALBITES, Midland Institute, Birmingham.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

The 53RD ANNUAL MEETING will be held at DUKINFIELD on GOOD FRIDAY, April 8, 1898. Preacher, Rev. H. GOW, B.A., of Leicester.
Subject of Papers at the Evening Meeting:—
"Our Sunday School Institutions."
I.—Those which need guidance and control. Rev. J. C. ODGERS, B.A.
II.—Those which deserve larger recognition and support. Rev. W. R. SHANKS.
Full detailed arrangements next week.

ILKESTON UNITARIAN CHAPEL.

The Ilkeston Unitarian congregation venture to APPEAL for assistance in their church work. This has grown so much of late that it has been found absolutely necessary to procure a larger place of worship than the present chapel. It is proposed, therefore, to purchase a plot of land near the existing site on which to erect a church. The present building will be altered and used as a schoolroom, for which there is great need.

The North-Midland Presbyterian and Unitarian Association, after a special investigation, recommend the scheme to the sympathy and support of the Unitarian public.

Subscriptions are earnestly requested on behalf of this work.

It is proposed to hold a Bazaar in the Town Hall, Ilkeston, in May, to raise the nucleus of a Building Fund, and gifts of material and articles for this purpose, or goods for a rummage stall, will be thankfully received by

Mrs. F. SMYTHEM,
39, Station-road, Ilkeston;
Mrs. J. HARROP WHITE,
Leyton Burrow, Mansfield;
Mrs. J. C. WARREN,
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or
Rev. E. A. MALEY,
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The Treasurer, Mr. C. F. PEARSON, begs to acknowledge the following additional donations towards the Building Fund:—

	£	s.	d.
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Mr. William Colfox	5
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Mr. Howard Young	1

The PUBLIC OPENING of the Church and Mission will take place on THURSDAY, April 21st, 1898.

BATTLE.—The old Unitarian Chapel will be RE-OPENED as MOUNTJOY HALL on WEDNESDAY, March 30th. The Hon. T. BRASSEY will take the Chair at 7 P.M.
Tea at 6 o'clock.
No Tickets needed. All welcome.

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